

**A CRITICAL EVALUATIVE CASE STUDY OF THE B.ED MODULE,  
'ANALYSING EDUCATION' TAUGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL,  
PIETERMARITZBURG**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

In this study I set out to critically evaluate the B.Ed 'Analysing Education' module, one of the first OBE programmes to be implemented at a South African academic institution in the Department of Education, at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

I took as my starting point the belief that 'Analysing Education' was a response to the new OBE paradigm, hence it should have been an exemplar of OBE. It should therefore reflect OBE philosophy in its structure, design, implementation and assessment methods and strategies.

These are the areas which were evaluated in this research programme.

The purpose of the study was two-fold: on one hand, it was to explore the extent to which the module was guided by OBE principles; on the other hand it was intended to evaluate the effectiveness and constraints of the module in implementing OBE principles.

In evaluating the module, I consulted the sources which I perceived relevant for the study. 'Analysing Education' learning material, lecturers who designed the module, tutors who implemented the module, and learners of the module were the relevant sources for this study. A naturalistic 'qualitative' and 'descriptive' approach was used to collect and analyse data from all the stakeholders who were involved in this module.

The findings indicated that some strengths and weaknesses existed in the module's attempt to implement OBE principles. The strengths were discovered in the use of tutorial methods where learners engaged in group discussions and debates and where they acquired skills of interaction.

The success of the module in introducing OBE concepts explicitly to the learners, was another strength.

A weakness was discovered in the strategies used to assess the progress of the learners in the module. The findings indicated that this weakness emanated from the module's development strategy -the involvement of external forces such as SAIDE and the Ministry of Education confused the purpose of the module. The confusion of the purpose brought about the failure of the module to address certain OBE principles such as criterion-referenced assessment, and continuous progress assessment. Assessment was found to be a non-formative linear process. The module eventually had to meet three diverse needs: those of SAIDE , of the National Ministry of Education, and of the B.Ed students in the department. At the end of the module students had made good progress towards understanding OBE as a system, but had made considerably less progress in developing skills of analysis, interpretation and argument, which were purported to be the fundamental outcomes of the module.

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**Outcomes-based assessment**

A process which involves the observation and monitoring of each learner's progress in an OBE programme or module to assess the development of the intended knowledge and skills, and the attainment of the intended outcomes by the learner. It also involves the activities of 'diagnosing' those learners who have learning difficulties (giving suitable activities that will 'remedy' the problems experienced); granting credits to those who have mastered the intended knowledge and skills; and accelerating those who have indicated competency in the intended knowledge and skills to the next level of their education. Continuous Assessment and Criterion-based Assessment are relevant approaches in the assessment of OBE programmes and modules. (In this project, the concept 'assessment' has been used synonymously with 'outcomes-based assessment').

**Progression**

A term used to describe the movement of a learner from one level on the NQF, to the next (NDE, 1997). This has been used in this thesis as an alternative to the movement of a learner within the module, at his/her own pace and style of learning.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Chapter one: A brief overview of the South African education system in transition: a background to the emergence of outcomes-based programmes and modules**

1.1	Introduction .....	1
1.2	The origin of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) .....	2
1.3	Theoretical background for Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) .....	4
1.3.1	Outcomes-Based Education theory and a learner .....	5
1.4	Implementation of Outcomes-Based Education as the new South African Education system .....	6
1.5	A shift from an Objectives-Based Approach to Outcomes-Based Approach .....	7
1.6	Implications for the development of the Outcomes-Based Educational programmes and modules .....	11
1.7	Challenges in the development of Outcomes-Based Educational programmes and modules .....	13
1.8	Implications for teaching and learning .....	14
1.9	Critical issues relating to the implications for teaching and learning .....	16
1.10	Challenges in the implementation and assessment of Outcomes Based Educational programmes and modules .....	16
1.11	The purpose of the study .....	18

1.12	The study in context . . . . .	20
1.12.1	The background understanding of the module . . . . .	20
1.12.2	Summary of the procedure of the study . . . . .	21
1.13	The purpose of the literature review in this thesis . . . . .	22

## **Chapter two: Reflections on personal observations and experiences that led to the development of the study**

2.1	Introduction . . . . .	24
2.2	The impact of my experiences in the development of this study . . . . .	25
2.3	The actual implementation methods and strategies . . . . .	26
2.3.1	Techniques for the module implementation . . . . .	26
2.3.2	Tutor allocation . . . . .	27
2.3.3	Time allocated to the tutorials and the purposes of the tutorials . . . . .	27
2.3.4	The actual role of the tutors in the tutorials . . . . .	27
2.4	The actual assessment strategies used in the module . . . . .	28
2.4.1	The actual assessment techniques and strategy . . . . .	28
2.4.2	Performance indicators . . . . .	28
2.4.3	Time allocated to assessment activities . . . . .	29
2.4.4	The actual role of the tutors and the module co-ordinator in assessment . . . . .	29
2.5	Summary . . . . .	29

### **Chapter three: Methodology of the evaluative research**

3.1	Theoretical position of the evaluation research methodology .....	30
3.2	Operationalisation .....	31
3.2.1	Construction of ‘Lecturer interview’ Questions .....	32
3.2.1.1	The ‘Lecturer interview’ design .....	32
3.2.1.2	The Breakdown of the ‘Lecturer Interview’ questions .....	33
3.2.2	Construction of a ‘Tutor Questionnaire’ and ‘Tutor Interview’ Questions ..	34
3.2.2.1	The ‘Tutor Questionnaire’ design .....	35
3.2.2.2	The ‘Tutor Interview’ design .....	35
3.2.2.3	Breakdown of the ‘Tutor Interview’ Questions .....	35
3.2.3	The Construction of the Student Open-Ended Questionnaire .....	36
3.2.3.1	Questionnaire Design .....	36
3.3	Evaluative Research Population .....	37
3.4	Data Collection Techniques .....	37
3.4.1	Lecturers’ Interviews .....	38
3.4.1.1	Time allocated to the interviewing process .....	38
3.4.1.2	The consideration of ethics of data collection .....	38
3.4.1.3	The actual interviewing process .....	38
3.4.2	Tutor Interviews .....	39
3.4.2.1	Interviewing Techniques .....	39
3.4.3	Time allocated to the interviewing process .....	40
3.4.4	Student Questionnaire .....	40
3.5	Data Analysis Techniques .....	40



## **Chapter four: Analysis of the learning material : Workbooks**

4.1	Introduction .....	42
4.2	OBE principles for the development and production of learning-based material (LBM) .....	42
4.3	The structure and design of the module : when reflected in the learning-based material .....	44
4.3.1	The intended outcomes .....	44
4.3.2	The materials-based learning content-(Range statements) .....	45
4.3.3	Teaching and learning approach .....	46
4.3.4	The performance indicators .....	47

## **Chapter five: Lecturers' experiences of the development of the module, and perception of the module's success in addressing OBE principles**

5.1	Introduction .....	51
5.2	Plan, structure and design: The purpose, strategies and methods of the module development .....	53
5.2.1	The purpose of the module .....	53
5.2.2	The content of the module (Range Statements) .....	56
5.2.3	The design of implementation methods .....	58
5.2.4	Structure and design of the learning materials .....	58
5.2.5	The modes of assessment .....	60
5.3	Shortcomings in the Interviewing Process .....	60
5.4	Summary .....	61

## **Chapter six Tutors' experiences and perceptions of the module**

6.1	Introduction .....	63
6.2	Professional and academic background of the tutors .....	63
6.3	An overview of the of the interviewing process .....	64
6.4	Plan, structure and design of the module - from the tutors' perceptions and experiences of the module .....	65
6.4.1	The purpose of the module .....	65
6.4.2	The structure and design of the module .....	67
6.4.3	The content of the module from the tutors' experiences and perceptions ..	68
6.5	Implementation strategies from the tutors' experiences and perceptions .....	70
6.6	Assessment methods and strategies from the tutors' experiences and perceptions ..	72
6.7	Summary .....	74

## **Chapter seven: The structure, design , implementation methods and modes of assessment - from the learners' experiences and perceptions**

7.1	Introduction .....	76
7.2	The actual number of respondents .....	77
7.3	Academic and professional background of the students who attended the module ..	77
7.4	The structure and design of te module: The learners' experiences and perceptions ..	79
7.4.1	The purpose of the module .....	79

7.4.2	The implementation strategies: from the learners' experiences and perception .....	81
7.4.3	Design of the OBE content and learning-based material (LBM) .....	84
7.4.4	The Assessment strategies and methods .....	85
7.5	Summary .....	88

## **Chapter eight      Summary, OBE principles, discussion and findings**

8.1	Summary .....	90
8.2	Outcomes-Based Education principles .....	90
8.2.1	Principles relating to programme/module development .....	90
	8.2.1.1 Democratic decision-making .....	90
	8.2.1.2 Redress .....	91
	8.2.1.3 Differentiation .....	91
	8.2.1.4 Relevance .....	92
	8.2.1.5 An integrated approach/holistic approach .....	92
	8.2.1.6 The intended outcomes .....	93
	8.2.1.7 Mastery learning .....	94
	8.2.1.8 Continuous assessment and continuous progress .....	94
	8.2.1.9 Learner-centredness .....	95
8.2.2	Principles relating to teaching and learning practice .....	95
	8.2.2.1 Democratic decision-making .....	95
	8.2.2.2 The integrated approach/holistic approach .....	96
	8.2.2.3 The intended outcomes .....	96
	8.2.2.4 Mastery learning .....	96
	8.2.2.5 Continuous assessment and continuous progress .....	97
	8.2.2.6 Learner-centredness .....	97
8.2.3	Principles relating to assessment practice .....	97
	8.2.3.1 Assessment criteria .....	97

8.2.3.2	Continuous assessment	97
8.2.3.3	Continuous progress	98
8.3	The extent to which these OBE principles were met	99
8.3.1	Democratic decision-making	99
8.3.2	Redress	99
8.3.3	Differentiation	99
8.3.4	Relevancy	100
8.3.5	The integrated approach/holistic approach	102
8.3.6	The intended outcomes	103
8.3.7	Continuous assessment, mastery learning and continuous progress	106
8.3.8	Learner centredness	108
8.4	The strengths and weaknesses of the module	109
8.4.1	The strengths of the module	109
8.4.1.1	The techniques used in the module implementation	109
8.4.1.2	An interactive approach	110
8.4.1.3	Redress of educational differences	110
8.4.2	The weaknesses of the module	110
8.4.2.1	The tripartite-potential tension	111
8.4.2.2	Time-constraint	111
8.4.2.3	Lack of tight integration between units	112
8.4.2.4	A challenge of integrating theory and practice	112
8.4.2.5	Lack of tutor training	113
8.4.2.6	Poor management of assessment activities	113
8.4.2.7	Illogical design of the assessment activities	114
8.4.2.8	The setting up of the ambitious intended outcomes	114
8.5	Understandings reached	115
	References	118

**List of tables**

Table 1.1	A shift from objectives to outcomes .....	9
Table 1.2	The emerging paradigm of education .....	12
Table 4.1	Assessment essays .....	48
Table 6.1	Professional experience .....	64
Table 6.2	Tutors experience before tutoring .....	64
Table 7.1	Academic and professional qualifications of the PMB and Madadeni respondents .....	78
Table 7.2	Professional experiences of PMB and Madadeni respondents .....	78
Table 7.3 (a)	The purpose of the module -128 PMB respondents .....	80
Table 7.3 (b)	The purpose of the module - 118 Madadeni respondents .....	81
Table 7.4 (a)	Teaching and learning strategies - 128 PMB respondents .....	82
Table 7.4 (b)	Teaching and learning strategies - 118 Madadeni respondents .....	83
Table 7.5 (a)	Perceptions on the learning materials - 128 PMB respondents .....	84
Table 7.5 (b)	Perceptions on the learning materials - 118 Madadeni respondents .....	84
Table 7.6 (a)	Assessment activities - 128 PMB respondents .....	86
Table 7.6 (b)	Assessment activities - 118 Madadeni respondents .....	87

## Appendices

Appendix A	: lecturer interview (questions) .....	126
Appendix B	: lecturer A interview transcript .....	129
Appendix C	: lecturer B interview transcript .....	135
Appendix D	: lecturer C interview transcript .....	140
Appendix E	: tutor interview (question) .....	143
Appendix F	: tutor questionnaire .....	145
Appendix G	: tutor f interview transcript .....	147
Appendix H	: students' open-ended questionnaire .....	151

## CHAPTER ONE

### **A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN TRANSITION: A BACKGROUND TO THE EMERGENCE OF OUTCOMES-BASED PROGRAMMES AND MODULES.**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The notion of an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) system - an integrated approach to education and training, is the key element in current changes in the South African education system. Educational changes are reflected in the White Paper on Education and Training (WPET), as informed by the visions of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), (among others).

The fact that OBE is a product of COSATU, indicates that it is economic and business-related. It seems to have been realised by the current government that the economic upliftment of this country has been, and is still being, crippled by a lack of competent socio-economic knowledge and development. Having realised that incompetent workers are the products of the CNE (Christian National Education), the current State assumes that by changing the present education system and introducing skilled-based OBE, the level of incompetence will be redressed. 'To know' and 'to be able to do' competently, are the key requirements for workers and industries to be compatible with what OBE is trying to achieve. As it is believed that social development is determined by the developed economy, and that the latter is the outcome from an individual who has developed knowledge and skills, it is assumed therefore that OBE will determine the development of industrial production, and will impact on economic and social development.

As already argued, OBE is an attempt to redress the socio-economic legacies created by CNE, therefore change in education will presumably contribute to that redress. This implies that redress should begin in the teaching and learning situation where competent skills should be developed. OBE as a tool of such redress suggests that teachers should no longer wait for centrally developed and prescribed curricula in the form of syllabi, but they themselves should

produce curricula. Curriculum development should be based on the skills that teachers believe are essential for socio-economic production and development, when guided by the centrally-designed essential outcomes. This implies that teachers should now participate in decision-making about the curriculum and in the actual process of its development and production.

It can be argued that knowledge is now understood and interpreted in terms of the holistic life skills which each learner should demonstrate in an integrated approach to knowledge, practical skills, and social values. This implies that OBE considers that a human being is complex in nature, that s/he comprises multi-dimensional aspects such as behaviour, values, attitudes, morals, background knowledge and skills which must be developed. Education must therefore develop these multi-dimensional aspects into holistic abilities which a learner should, ultimately, use to initiate and advance socio-economic developments in the country.

It is assumed that OBE, according to the ANC-COSATU vision, will help to curb segregation between the previously racially differentiated South African education system and between education and training. It is also assumed that it will “...*restructure the divided education system known for its poor access, poor progression, low participation, and separate system of provision, curriculum, examination and certification structures*” (De Clercq, cited in Kallaway, P. *et al*, 1997:143).

Since these aims seem to reflect socio-political and socio-economic imperatives, the integrated approach is assumed to be the best possible strategy to address them. Moreover, there seems to be an assumption that this new OBE approach is necessary to meet the demands of the majority of South Africans who are poor, as well as the demands for South African economic development.

## **1.2 The origin of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)**

There seems to be no clear evidence about the origin of this integrated approach to education and training termed OBE. As Jansen points out,

*OBE does not have any single historical legacy. Some trace its roots to behavioural psychology associated with B. F. Skinner; others to mastery learning as espoused by Benjamin Bloom; some associate OBE with the curriculum objectives of Ralph Tyler; yet another claim is that OBE derives from the competency-based education models associated with vocational education in the United Kingdom (1997:1).*

South African OBE principles are similar to those which guided the education systems in the UK, the United States of America and Australia. The education systems from these countries shared a common purpose - the purpose of the achievement of the intended outcomes by each learner in the education situation. I argue that OBE is a version of Competency-based Education (CBE) and Competency-based Teacher Education (CBTE) - movements which were spawned in the United States in the late 1960s (Houston, 1995). This argument is based on the definitions and descriptions which are given to the concepts OBE and CBE, and on the fact that “...*the most immediate origin of OBE is in the competency debates followed in Australia and New Zealand*” (Christie, cited in Jansen, 1997:1).

OBE can be described as a coined term which describes a process of educating for the achievement of set outcomes. The meaning of the concept OBE can be traced to the concept ‘outcomes’ which is defined by Jessup as

*...predetermined statements in the form of competences or attainments which serve as targets and guide the course of learning. The statements also form the basis of assessment and recognition of achievement (1994:134).*

The concept OBE can therefore be defined as “...*a learner-centred, results-oriented design based on the belief that all individuals can learn*” (NDE, 1997:17). Like OBE, CBE is a coined term, the meaning of which Houston (1995) traces from the concept ‘competence’ which ordinarily means being adequate for a purpose, or legally qualified, admissible or capable. Whilst he finds it in the sense of CBE referring to “...*adequate preparation to begin a professional career, and has its direct linkage to certification requirements*”, Jessup defines competence as “...*the ability to perform towards the recognised standards*” (1994:25).



What indicates that OBE is a version of CBE are the above descriptions and definitions which reflect a common purpose of the development of ‘competences’ or ‘capabilities’, which both OBE and CBE intend to do. This implies that OBE and CBE are synonymous in principle. They also seem to reflect a common belief that outcomes are achievable, thus should be clearly and transparently specified at the initial point of learning.

Another belief common to these two educational concepts is that outcomes can be achieved by each and every learner in his/her pace and style of learning. This suggests that every learner can develop the capacity to learn and develop competence in skills in a programme or module. This implies that outcomes-based or competency-based strategies and methods must be used in the development and implementation of the educational programmes and modules.

### **1.3 Theoretical background for Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)**

In my critical point of view, OBE is being introduced specifically as a process to supersede CNE or, what one can term, the Objectives-based education system in SA. There seems to be no particularly explicit theory on which this new OBE is based. As already argued, OBE is economic and business-related and speaks the language of ‘training requirements’ for practical performances. It therefore seems to be a policy which tells and informs all those who are involved with the education of ‘what to do’ and ‘how to do it’, ‘what to change’ and ‘how to change it’ e.g. *“Teachers will develop their own learning programmes as long as they take into account the various kinds of outcomes and complement the needs of learners”* (NDE, 1997:12). It even tells them how their involvement and activities will be administered and monitored,

*The NQF will create an integrated national framework for learning achievements and to enhance access to, and mobility and quality within, education and training”* (SAQA ACT, 1995, cited in the NDE, 1997).

What seems to be mainly emphasised by this ‘policy’, or Outcomes-Based Education principle is ‘how to do’, and the capacity of doing it, which to me means ‘performance’ - people who are produced by the OBE programmes must be able to perform (competently).

### ***1.3.1 Outcomes-Based Education theory and a learner***

In the implementation of an OBE module, it is the role of an educator to acknowledge that each and every learner has a purpose - a purpose of developing his or her innate potential to the desired level of competency. Therefore, s/he must be helped to recognise and develop that potential. OBE further assumes that every learner has his/her unique background knowledge and skills which must be reconstructed, re-organised and developed into new knowledge and experience. This implies to an educator that it is his/her role to ensure that the learner realises the potential and experience s/he has through creative and relevant strategies which suit his/her abilities and style of learning.

In terms of this project, Dewey (in Ornstein and Levine, 1984) is acknowledged to be the relevant theorist who perceives and views the processes of educating and learning in the same way as OBE does. He perceives learning to be a process which should consider that every learner as an individual has the ability to become competent in whatever task s/he performs. He therefore argues that education's sole purpose should be to contribute to the personal and social growth of individuals, which is what OBE purports to do. Jessup also concurs in his statement that:

*Learning is a personal experience which can take many forms and can occur in many places. In fact we all learn with varying degrees of efficiency. What we learn varies in its value to us as individuals and its general utility (1994:3).*

This implies that a learner should be given the chance to explore, discover, identify problems, and render relevant solutions for him/herself. It is still the role of a teacher to identify the relevant sources of knowledge from which the learner should explore on her or his own. S/he should develop an understanding of the content, the underlying assumptions and implications, hence be able to explore other related sources. The type of education s/he receives should also develop in her/him the ability to apply the insights gained from those sources into practical situations. S/he should be able to develop new knowledge. Hence Dewey outlines the ideal process of intelligent teaching and learning

- *The learner has a genuine situation of experience, hence should be involved in an activity in which she or he is interested.*
- *Within this experience, the learner has a genuine problem that stimulates thinking.*
- *The learner processes the information or does research to acquire the information needed to solve the problem.*
- *The learner develops possible and tentative solutions that may solve the problem.*
- *The learner tests the solutions by applying them to the problem (cited in Ornstein and Levine, 1984).*

Dewey's perceptions of education as a process which focuses on an individual's learning through experience is relevant to what OBE suggests for the programmes and modules which are designed to develop integrated knowledge and skills in an individual. This means that teaching must acknowledge each learner's unique abilities, knowledge and skills which have already been internalised and which make her or him differ from others.

#### **1.4 Implementation of Outcomes-Based Education as the new South African Education System**

As a first step towards implementing this integrated approach to education and training, the National Ministry of Education and Training (NMET) introduced the National Qualification Framework (NQF) - a vehicle for "...portability and progression purposes" (NDE, 1997:42). Through this integrated approach it is intended and assumed that the issues of knowledge and skills in, and between, learning contexts will be addressed. Issues of 'knowledge' refer to the theoretical issues, and 'skills' refer to the rational and critical thinking performances which a learner should demonstrate competently, at the end of a programme or module.

Within the NQF framework, learners will be transferred from one grade or level to the next, on the basis of accumulated credits from the processes of education. Achievers will be granted certificates and qualifications across different levels of education provision. They will also move from one grade to the next in accordance with their own pace of learning and achievement of the

expected outcomes. This, according to the education planners, implies that competences will be inferred from performances. What is intended is what De Clercq defines as ...

*a shift from a system that differentiates and socialises students for rigid hierarchical division of labour of modern industrial societies, to a system producing high ability - high quality products with the ability to solve problems, think critically, and apply new skills and techniques to different situations (1997:156).*

For higher education and further education institutions, this integrated approach implies the development of programmes to perform the tasks outlined in the WPET. These programmes are intended to be characterised by the same practice of inferring from

*...the broad generic essential outcomes that inform all teaching and learning (which should permeate specific outcomes at every level of the NQF), their intended expectations called specific outcomes (NDE, 1996:24).*

This implies that learners in these programmes will be given credits on the basis of the observable outcomes they have achieved. Outcomes will be observable in the sense that learners will be required to be practically involved in the activities and performances. From these, they will have to show that they have mastered the skills required of them. These skills, which are defined as competences, will relate to the requirements of the socio-economic development of the country.

### **1.5 A shift from an Objectives-Based Approach to Outcomes-Based Approach**

The introduction of skills and knowledge based programmes and modules implies a paradigm shift from the centralised production of syllabi to institution-based programmes and modules. *“Syllabuses were prescriptive and detailed, allowing almost no room for teacher initiative”*(NDE, 1997:12). This implied what Wedekind *et al* (1996:420) describe as a shift from a *“...teacher-proof curriculum”* which could not involve teachers in its development. Teachers, (in the case of schools) and lecturers (in the case of higher education institutions) as educators are now required to be curriculum developers, or designers of programmes and

modules which are not as theoretical as those of the CNE, but which are based on accurate and extensive research. These should be characterised by the purpose developing in the learner, the holistic theoretical knowledge and practical abilities, required values and attitudes which a learner should portray at the end.

OBE programmes and modules should be based on the ‘democratic principle’ of differentiation which considers individual differences in terms of abilities, capabilities, paces and styles of learning to be important. Programmes should allow every learner’s involvement in decision-making about what s/he expects to learn, how s/he is capable of learning it, and how and when s/he must be assessed. Hence the actual programmes and modules should aim to develop in each learner the competent skills of performing socially and economically productive tasks.

With regard to the expected skills, programme designers should select those which they think are appropriate for the programme or module being developed , and which they also think are relevant to addressing learners’ learning needs.

Learning needs can be identified after the programme or module planners have done a needs assessment. It is through a ‘needs assessment’ that a decision can be taken on the supposed structure and design of the programme or module, the implementation process and the modes of assessment to be used. This also includes the selection of learning content and learning materials.

Furthermore, OBE means that tertiary institutions should shift away from their traditional lecture-based programmes where lecturers were the only sources of ‘valid’ and content-based knowledge which they would ‘dish’ out to the students through a lecturer-centred method of teaching. It also means a shift from memorising and reproducing content when required, to developing the ability to understand and apply that content creatively in practical situations. Studies on syllabi-based education indicate that

*Tasks were perceived as requiring only reproduction. The students were mainly extrinsically motivated, which increased the probability of a surface approach - students*

were pushed towards surface approaches by forms of assessment which seem to invite and reward reproductive answers (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1982:199-202).

As an alternative to the syllabi-based and objectives-based approach, the integrated approach indicates that learner-centred programmes and modules are intended to address each learner’s learning needs, and also to develop new knowledge and skills. There seems to be a belief that education that aims to develop the rationality of an individual will lead to an individual’s ability to contribute to social, political or economic development in the country.

In an attempt to highlight what actual implications this shift has for the development of programmes and modules, I have developed what I think are simplified but helpful dichotomies between the objectives-based education system (which is being phased out), and the proposed OBE. The purpose is to create a broad distinction between the two systems, hence to understand the extent to which this will challenge all those who perform the development, implementation and ‘consumption’ tasks. The following table 1.1 represents these dichotomies:

**Table 1.1** *A Shift from Objectives to Outcomes*

<b>From: Objectives-Based Approach</b>	<b>To: Outcomes-Based Approach</b>
<b>1. Programme or Module Planning</b>	<b>1. Programme or Module planning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- objectives guide the teaching process towards enabling learners to master the teaching - learning content.</li> <li>- is directed by the teacher’s or lecturer’s intentions about the learning content.</li> <li>- a teacher or lecturer is required to finish the prescribed syllabus.</li> <li>- a learner’s learning needs, interests, and intentions are not the areas of focus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- intended outcomes structure and shape all the learning processes, and what the learners achieve at the end.</li> <li>- is directed by the type of knowledge and skills intended to be achieved by a learner.</li> <li>- a teacher or a lecturer is required to develop the intended knowledge and skills.</li> <li>- a learner’s learning needs, interests and intentions are a priority.</li> </ul>

2. Structure and Design	2. Structure and Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is teacher/lecturer-centred. Enables the teacher or lecturer more time to internalise the content, to explore further from different sources and resources, to develop more understanding in spite of learners' ability to comprehend and conceptualise the prescribed syllabus knowledge.</li> <li>- focuses on what the syllabus prescribes in terms of content.</li> <li>- teachers hardly finish the syllabi. They select the bits and pieces of the syllabi contents which can be memorised by the learners - in spite of the structure of its presentation.</li> <li>- time does not allow for the completion of the syllabus.</li> <li>- learners hardly read analytically and hardly draw insights from other sources of information, but reproduce book content.</li> <li>- learning is about the acquisition of knowledge only, i.e. 'know what'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is learner-centred. Allows the learner to develop an understanding of the content whilst acquiring the other expected skills in the process of learning. A learner is intended to explore further what is of her or his own interest, and what s/he finds to be relevant to what s/he has been taught.</li> <li>- integrates both the content and skills.</li> <li>- programme/modules are to be structured such that coherence exist between units, and assessments should enable the internalisation of knowledge and the acquisition of skills by the learners.</li> <li>- exploring, discovering new knowledge which a learner finds relevant, are the fundamentals of learning. New knowledge is used critically and creatively in the assigned projects.</li> <li>- the learner's activity of 'processing' knowledge and applying it in practice is the area of focus.</li> </ul>

3. Programme/module Implementation	3. Programme/module Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- focuses on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, i.e. 'know what'.</li> <li>- a teacher/lecturer-centred approach based on the use of prescribed knowledge. Absorption of syllabus content and teaching- learning routines are the only forms of learning which are reproduced at the end of learning.</li> <li>- the prescribed knowledge is considered to be unquestionable valid. The teacher has the power of decision-making on what is to be learnt. S/he selects what s/he wants, and what s/he does not want to teach from the prescribed syllabus.</li> <li>- relevant books are prescribed by the teacher or lecturer.</li> <li>- what the teacher tries to do is to help a learner to understand and internalise the prescribed content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- focuses on the way in which the learner 'processes' knowledge and applies it in a required situation.</li> <li>- learner-centred approach supported by the use of learner-centred support materials. Acquisition of knowledge and skills in the learning content and context which become observable at the end of the programme or module.</li> <li>- The decision-making and the decision-taking on 'what to learn' and 'how to learn it', are the responsibilities of all the stake-holders involved in the teaching and learning situation..</li> <li>- the students are expected to explore further resources, and to critique it if the need arises.</li> <li>- the teacher tries to develop in the mind of a learner the ability to think creatively and critically, beyond the learning content.</li> </ul>

4. Modes of assessment	4. Modes of assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is normative in its nature: tests and exams are written routinely, at the specific times. The normal purpose is to measure those learners who have 'mastered' against those who have 'failed' to recall the content: comparisons and competition amongst the learners.</li> <li>- the extent to which learners have understood and internalised the contents of a subject, to the extent that they can recall and reproduce these when required, is the criterion for testing and evaluating the success of a programme/module.</li> <li>- internalising and recalling of the statements and classroom routines also serve as the tool for evaluating the achievement of learners in the programme/module.</li> <li>- achievement is inferred from the ability to recall facts and routines internalised in the learning content.</li> <li>- progression is guided by a specified time- frame, e.g. end of the semester or year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is both formative and summative in its nature: the educator identifies the abilities of a learner as they gradually develop in the programme or module. S/he diagnoses the difficulties experienced by the learner, indicates and renders a suitable 'remedy' where necessary.</li> <li>- the extent to which each learner has been able to master both the programme/ module content and the intended skills and values, is the criterion for assessing the success of the learner in that programme/module.</li> <li>- the deep and rational engagement of a learner with the content of the programme/module, her/his actual involvement in practical activities and her/his level of performance in those activities, indicate the extent to which s/he has achieved the specific outcomes.</li> <li>- achievement is perceived from competences which are inferred from performances in practical activities.</li> <li>- progression is informed by the time at which the specified outcomes have been achieved.</li> </ul>

## 1.6 Implications for the development of Outcomes-Based Educational programmes and modules

The dichotomies between CNE and OBE indicate that OBE programmes are not tailor-made instructions developed outside the teaching and learning situation, and brought in for the teachers to implement, as was the case with the CNE system. The same also applies with the teaching methods which should not be rigidly designed outside the teaching-learning situation, and be incorporated in the hope of achieving fruitful outcomes.

The nature and the learning needs of the learners who are to be encountered in the teaching-learning situation, should determine the structure and design of the learning programmes and modules. This includes the necessity to evaluate the background knowledge which each learner



has, the difficulties s/he might have with the module/programme, the style of learning, and the determination of the pace of mastering the requirements of module/programme.

This shift from Syllabus Based approach to an Outcomes-Based approach suggests the need for strategies which can be used in the development of programmes and modules. Jessup (1994:89-94) is an educational strategist who formulated 7 strategies as outlined in the following table 1.2:

**Table 1.2: The Emerging Paradigm of Education and Training**

step 1	<b>Initial Assessment/Accreditation Prior Learning:</b> <i>Skills and knowledge which the prospective learners and their advisers already possess should be assessed, before embarking on any programme.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>Draw up a profile of an individual competence, including both formally recorded achievements and uncertificated competences.</i>
step 2	<b>Guidance:</b> <i>Learners should be given clear guidance in the programme. Guidance should be in the form of clarifying outcomes, packages of units, attainment targets and qualifications.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>Some individuals will enter the process with clear and realistic goals needing little guidance. Others will be less certain and will wish to explore alternatives.</i>
step 3	<b>Action Planning:</b> <i>Individual action planning should stem directly from individualised learning, which in turn follows naturally once the individuals initial profile has been taken into account.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>Action plans should provide scope for identifying specific organisational goals and personal goals.</i>
step 4	<b>Programmes of learning:</b> <i>The form of the programme to be undertaken is set out in the individual action plan.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>The individual will be expected to take greater responsibility for his/her own learning, although guidance will be available throughout to support those who need it.</i>
step 5	<b>Continuous Assessment:</b> <i>This will be normal practice within a programme, although there will be exceptions where final examinations will prevail, for at least part of assessment.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>Assessment will frequently require the accumulation of evidence from different locations and from different assessors, reflecting different contexts of learning.</i>
step 6	<b>Unit credits:</b> <i>These go along with continuous assessment. They are accumulated and recorded in an individual's National Record.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>These are kept as a record which incorporates achievements.</i>
step 7	<b>Completion of action:</b> <i>The final stage of the action plan. A stage for the award of a National Vocational Qualification.</i>	<b>Normal Practice:</b> <i>In the new model, learning is regarded a continuing process. Each action will frequently be followed by a start of another.</i>

Jessup (1994:89-94) "The Emerging Paradigm of Education and Training"

## 1.7. Challenges in the development of Outcomes-Based Educational programmes and modules

With regard to the proposed integrated approach to education and training, educators are faced by a great challenge in meeting the demands of OBE. I see them being challenged by five essential tasks:

1. Achieving a clear understanding of the OBE specifications and their implications for planning and design.
2. Ensuring that the OBE integrated or holistic approach to teaching, learning and assessment is effectively implemented.
3. Ensuring that all learners who are credited for a programme or a module can perform competently in the activities they are assigned both in and out of the module context as a proof that the expected outcomes have been met.
4. Selecting the formative modes of assessment which are relevant and specific to diagnosing each and every learner's progress in the learning situation, while identifying 'masters' and 'slow-masters' of the expected skills, against the masses of learners in the learning situation.
5. Managing to correlate the time aspect to ensure that "*all learners succeed...and develop knowledge and skills at their own pace*" (NDE, 1997:12), while meeting the demands of the NQF, and education sponsors who want to see the observable outcomes within a specific time-frame.

To meet these challenges implies that educators as programme planners and developers need to develop their own knowledge and skills with respect to relevant and productive programmes and modules. It also implies a necessity to understand each learner's areas of educational need prior

to the programme or module development, which should serve as the basis for programme/module development.

## **1.8 Implications for teaching and learning**

It can be argued that OBE suggests a radical change in educators' strategies and methods of educating. Schools educators should no longer inform learners about the prescribed content-based knowledge which relied on what was termed syllabi and prescribed books. This also applies to tertiary educators: although the approach they used was not defined in terms of prescribed syllabi, they designed programmes and modules from extensively researched knowledge, a radical change is still imperative. Tertiary educators should now design programmes/module in a way that will develop in each learner, the ability to "think creatively" and to "perform practical activities" competently.

Based on the already argued fact that the background knowledge and learning needs of a learner should form the ground upon which new knowledge should be developed, OBE suggests that a learner has a voice in the decision-making about what and how s/he has to learn. Nevertheless, it still rests on educators' shoulders to take a decision on the type of knowledge that the learner has to master towards developing the necessary knowledge and skills.

The ability to apply the integrated approach to his or her teaching method is another implication for the educator. Thomas (1987) advocates two principles which I found relevant for the implementation of OBE programmes and modules: "*the 'mastery learning' principle which holds that ...each student deserves a fair chance to achieve the learning outcome, regardless of the ways she or he differs from other learners...*", and the "*continuous progress*" principle which holds that "*...each student should continuously be moving forward to new learning tasks in order to accomplish all that she or he is capable of in the time available*" (cited in Dunkin, 1987:220-224). The "*continuous progress*" principle implies that individual learners should, within the programme or module, be observed and monitored in their process of developing knowledge and skills. It also implies that they should progress from activity to activity at the level of their own pace and style of learning.

This integrated approach to skills and knowledge acquisition seems to suggest that both the “*mastery learning*” and “*continuous progress*” principles must be integrated in the process of teaching and learning. This implies that teaching, learning and assessment are integrated processes. Within the teaching and learning processes is the ‘diagnosis’ of each learner’s pace and style of learning. There is also the identification and acceleration of those learners who have mastered the intended knowledge and skills either from one activity to the next, from one ‘unit’ to the next, or from one module to the next .

A learner who has been observed to be competent in the learning activities and content, who has proved competency by attaining the required standard of understanding and skills, who has shown the level of excellence in those tasks, should be accelerated to the next tasks within the module. The same must apply to the programmes/modules in succession - if the student proves that s/he has mastered the expected skills, s/he must be accelerated to the next programme or module, and must be given credits for the mastered tasks at the time of achievement.

The above implications imply that the educator has the task of assessing each learner as an individual, ensuring that each learner accomplishes tasks at her/his own pace. The role of the educator in this regard is to assess each learner’s progress towards the targeted skills by means of recording in his/her logbook the kind of achievements each learner accomplishes as s/he gradually develops towards becoming competent in the module.

The derivation of the new meanings of the concepts ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’ from OBE system is another implication for programme/module implementation. ‘Learning’ is perceived in terms of the active involvement of a learner in the process of learning new knowledge and in the acquisition of the essential skills. ‘Learning’ involves the activities of exploring and discovering more knowledge, beyond what the programme/module presents. These activities should be relevant for the essential socio-economic development of the country.

On the grounds that the meaning embedded in the concept of ‘teaching’ has been more associated with traditional teacher-centredness, the concept has been changed to ‘educating’. The ‘educating’ approach which OBE values is that which integrates the process of facilitating the

programme/module content, and the process of assessing the learner's progress towards the intended outcomes is also integrated in the facilitation process.

### **1.9 Critical issues relating to the implications for teaching and learning.**

The above discussed implications for teaching and learning raise a number of critical questions about the feasibility of implementing OBE approach in the teaching and learning situation. The following are five among many critical questions:

1. Are educators (programme/module designers and implementers) competent enough to judge socially and economically productive tasks?
2. Are learners (programme/module consumers) in the best position to acknowledge the socially and economically productive tasks, hence to judge a relevant programme/module to achieve this?
3. Do pre-specified and accredited outcomes give any chance to the educators to respond to learner's needs?
4. Is it feasible to the educators to take individual learner's needs into account in a mass-based system?
5. Are educators in a position to set integrated assessments which are informed by relevant methods which assess a number of elements and all their performance criteria, simultaneously?

### **1.10 Challenges in the implementation and assessment of Outcomes Based Educational programmes and modules**

The concept of 'implementation' in an OBE approach means the process of reducing the existing gap between the images of the module planners and the intended outcomes. By the 'images' of

the module is meant the vision which the planners had about the type of learners which they intended that the module should produce.

Although it is claimed that educators were represented in the development of OBE, it is a fact that OBE was developed in the time when the new government had just assumed its power. It could not have been easy to consult with people who are the actual implementers of education in the classroom situation - the educators. These are the people who are expected to implement OBE, who are expected to develop OBE programmes and modules, and who face the great challenge of developing a clear understanding of what OBE is, and what it implies for the new teaching strategies and methods they should use when educating a learner. I therefore see the following situations as great challenges for teachers who have internalised the knowledge and experience of the traditional CNE based teaching strategies and methods:

- I. Changing from traditional ‘telling’ method, to a rational, creative teaching method which results in all learners in the learning programme developing rational and creative thinking skills.
2. Ensuring that all learners succeed. After all, the intended knowledge and skills have been developed at each learner’s own pace and style of learning.
3. Implementing the OBE demand of developing a collaborative attitude and values through engaging learners in team-work activities, while addressing the demand to fulfil the individual learner’s learning style, pace and interest.
4. Ensuring that each and every learner is assessed and credited only on the knowledge and skills s/he achieved from the situation, when the teacher is faced by a huge number of learners in the teaching-learning situation.
5. Understanding and interpreting the following imperative OBE concepts correctly:
  - specific or intended outcomes;
  - assessment criteria;

- continuous assessment;
- performances;
- competences;
- range statements.

### 1.11 The purpose of the study

Although “...no dominant model of OBE for the new South African education and training system has emerged as yet” (MacGrath, 1997:169), the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg is one of the Higher Education institutions which has attempted to put OBE into practice. This has been done by the Department of Education in this institution through the development and production of the OBE module called ‘Analysing Education’. And, since this is an OBE module, it ought to reflect the integrated approach in its structure and design, its implementation strategies and methods and in the modes of assessment with respect to the achievement of the expected outcomes.

On the premise that ‘Analysing Education’ is based on the stated OBE principles, and on my assumption that this module is a response to the OBE paradigm shift, I expect it to be an exemplar of OBE, i.e. it must reflect the OBE philosophy, methods and strategies in its practice. This means that the teaching and learning methods should have been OBE-based. It also implies that learners should have experienced OBE strategies and methods in the process of learning.

Moreover, those who passed the module should have achieved the intended knowledge and skills. Those who were not succeeding should have been given assistance with any difficulties they might have had with the module, hence be allowed to develop the intended abilities at their own paces and styles of learning. On the basis of the stated assumptions about an OBE module, I intend to explore:

1. The extent to which the ‘Analysing Education’ module reflects OBE principles with specific focus on:
  - 1.1 The development of the module, which involved the planning and design processes.

- 1.2 The implementation of the module, which involved teaching and learning processes, and the environment in which these took place.
- 1.3 The modes of assessment which were used to monitor and to evaluate the progress of the module toward the achievement of the expected outcomes.
2. The strengths and weaknesses of the module in its attempt to put OBE into practice.
3. Those factors which might have brought about the success or failure of the module in achieving the expected outcomes.

The following are the methods which were used to address the purpose of this study:

- (a) Reflection on my personal observations and own experiences as one of the tutors of the module.
- (b) Examination and analysis of the learner-centred teaching materials. These were Unit 1: 'Assessment'; Unit 2: 'Curriculum' and Unit 3: 'Knowledge'.
- (c) Interviews with the lecturers who were involved in the development of the module: discovering the strategies and methods they used to design the course. This involves its structure, the design of the learning materials, the modes of assessment selected, and the assessment activities.
- (d) Interviews with the tutors who implemented the module: exposing their personal experiences with the module when they were involved in its implementation. The interviews were aimed at analysing the strategies and methods they used to implement the module, and also to investigate the assessment strategies which they used to monitor the progress of the students towards the achievement of the expected outcomes. Their perceptions and views on the programme's capability to address OBE principles were also explored.



- (e) Recording responses from students through an open-ended questionnaire in order to discover from each student, her or his own experience with the module. This includes the learning content, support materials, assessment activities, strategies used to assess competency in the targeted skills, and the observable outcomes achieved.

## **1.12 The study in context**

### ***1.12.1 The background***

The ‘Analysing Education’ module was basically a new course or module in the Department of Education which was put into practice for the first time in 1997. It was a semester course which ran from February to June. It was one of more OBE modules or courses which had been introduced with the intention of offering a skills-based programme to teachers who were upgrading their qualifications.

Both a programme and a module share the same format in the sense that they both have explicit goals which must definitely be attained at their end. Hodgeson defines the concept module in terms of “...*a sequence of lessons in one single topic, amounting themselves to at least a mini course that can be combined in various ways with other modules to constitute one particular study programme*” (1993:77). Hence a module can be understood to be a package of learning and teaching, using self instructional materials .

Like a programme which is subdivided into pieces or modules which are interrelated or united by one set of expected outcomes observed at the end of the programme, a module is also subdivided into pieces called lessons or units, of more or less standard length. Their length is determined by some unit of study time which a learner might reasonably be expected to spend studying to achieve the outcomes specified for the module. When a programme or a module is analysed or evaluated, “...*there are 3 important areas of focus in that evaluation or analysis:*

- (a) *the learning content (the curriculum itself),*
- (b) *the teaching that is provided and,*

(c) *outcomes that are realised*" (Eisner, 1979:176).

These are the very areas which were focussed on in the evaluation of this module:

- (a) the planning and design of the module (the content of the module),
- (b) the implementation strategies and methods (teaching that was provided) and
- (c) the modes of assessment used and outcomes that are realised by all the participants involved in the module.

### **1.12.2            *Summary of the procedure of the study***

1. Reflections on my observations and my experiences with the module form the initial step of this study . This does not mean to say that the study was directed or influenced by my preconceptions, but I found it to be a useful starting point because my interest in investigating this study was aroused through my practical involvement with the module. And it is where I began to have questions about the OBE approach and its feasibility in practice. Details are given in Chapter 2 of this project.
2. Documentary analysis, whereby the ‘Analysing Education’ learning material was examined, to find out the extent to which it was guided by the OBE specifications and philosophy in its structure and design, was the second stage of the study. (An analysis of ‘Analysing Education’ learning material helped towards reflecting on issues and questions which were triangulated between the selected data sources in a questionnaire and interviews). Chapter 4 of this project reflects this in detail.
3. Data collection from the lecturers was the third stage of the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a fixed sample of 3 lecturers who are referred to as module planners in this project. Some of the questions were generated from my observations, and data from material analysis. Again, details are given in Chapter 5.

4. Data collection from the tutors was the fourth stage of the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 6 out of 8 tutors who implemented the module. Some of the questions asked were developed from data from my observations of the module, data from documentary analysis and data from the lecturers. Detailed information is given in Chapter 6.
5. Data collection from the learners was the fifth stage of the study. Data were collected through a questionnaire which incorporates both close and open items which was constructed from questions which arose from my observations, documentary analysis, data collected from the lecturers, and data collected from the tutors. The questionnaire was completed by 118 out of 140 Madadeni B.Ed. students who did the module. The same also applied to 128 out of 180 Pietermaritzburg B.Ed. students who did the module. Detailed information appears in Chapter 7.
6. Data were analysed and interpreted on the basis of the procedures 1 to 5 above. The principle of triangulation was applied in terms of the themes which arose from these responses. Details appear in Chapters 4,5, 6 and 7. Findings and conclusions drawn from the study are presented in Chapter 8.

### **1.13 The purpose of the literature review in this thesis**

Since ‘Analysing Education’ was being implemented for the first time, it had obviously not been evaluated in any other project. However, many other education projects have been evaluated, but such evaluations are not easy to access because they are kept as confidential reports for departments and for funders rather than being academic projects intended for publication.

For the above stated reason, it has been difficult in this thesis to meet the requirements of reviewing literature for the purposes of “...*replicating previous research...*” and “...*reviewing what other researchers have discovered...*” (Mouton, 1996:120). The literature has instead been used to create what Mouton describes as “...*theoretical formulations or definitions of key concepts*” (120). And, the approach used in the review of evidence in this thesis is guided by

Giddens (1989) who suggests that if the problem has not been clarified, the researcher should sift through whatever related research does exist to see how useful it is for the purpose at hand.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REFLECTIONS ON PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

*Although consulting scientific literature is a very important means of acquiring background knowledge for starting a research project, it must be kept in mind that it is not the only one - information on a research problem can also be obtained by direct observation or even by participation in a relevant situation (Bless and Hidgson-Smith, 1995:25).*

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents informal observations and personal experiences which I gained while involved as one of the tutors of the 'Analysing Education' module. This was the initial stage of the study.

I see it necessary to point out that reflecting on my experiences does not imply that the study was directed or influenced by my preconceptions of the object of study - the module. But the purpose is to expose facts about how I developed an interest in undertaking the study from my involvement with the 'Analysing Education' module which is the object of this study. However, preconceptions are sometimes hard to remove, particularly in the evaluative study. Therefore, this information served to pre-focus the questions about the object of study.

Insights gained from these observations and experiences highlighted the necessity to analyse materials (as presented in Chapter 4), to interview lecturers (as presented in Chapter 5), to interview tutors (as presented in Chapter 6), and to collect data from the learners through a questionnaire (as presented in Chapter 7). This means that some of the questions which guided the analysis of the material, those asked of the lecturers, those asked of the tutors, and those asked of the students were developed from the informal observations and experiences acquired when I was involved in the tutoring of the module.

## **2.2 The impact of my experiences in the development of this study**

My personal involvement in the tutoring of the ‘Analysing Education’ module developed in me insights and an interest in evaluating this module. Basically, this involvement exposed me to the concept of Outcomes Based Education (OBE). Getting exposed to, and involved with this concept provided the opportunity to analysing it critically, and understanding its values and the underlying assumptions about the supposed nature of education, and its implications for practice (and these have been identified in the first Chapter of this project).

By practice in this regard I mean questioning critically what OBE implies for the planning and design of the programmes and modules, implementing those programmes and modules, and assessing the extent to which they might have achieved the intended goals.

This exposure further gave me the opportunity to question critically the concept of OBE itself and to question the feasibility of putting OBE principles and values into practice. Another critical issue was the extent to which an OBE module could develop in the learners the skills of critically arguing, and interpreting the theoretical issues, within a semester period. On the grounds that ‘Analysing Education’ was the first among those so called OBE modules, it therefore became the target of this study.

I therefore decided to explore what insights from the people who were practically involved in the development of the ‘analysing Education’ module had to offer. The purpose was to find out from their experiences if the module was developed from the OBE principles in its structure, design, implementation and assessment strategies and methods. I intended to analyse and find out the extent to which it was feasible to implement OBE principles in this module, and to find out the factors that might have contributed to either the success or failure of the module to put OBE principles into practice, and to achieve the intended outcomes. Therefore, the issues which I intended to explore pertained to:

- The strategies and methods used by the designers in the development of this module. This involved the selection and design of the implementation and assessment of the module.

This also involved exploring the design of activities which might enable each learner to engage with the activities from which the desired knowledge and competent skills would be inferred during the learning process, and at the end of the module.

- The actual implementation strategies used in the module.
- The designed and the actual modes of assessment used in module.
- The extent to which the intended outcomes were achievable.

On the grounds that I neither observed nor experienced anything with the development process of the module, this Chapter neglects this aspect. The focus of this Chapter is therefore on the reflection on the implementation process which I had observed and experienced, which involved the module facilitation and modes of assessment used in the module.

## **2.3 The actual implementation methods and strategies**

### ***2.3.1 Techniques for the module implementation***

Tutoring and learner-based workbooks (Unit 1- Assessment; Unit 2 -Curriculum; and Unit 3 - Knowledge) were the only methods which were designed to facilitate this module. Although a couple of what were described as "formal" lectures were conducted by the co-ordinator of this module, I would not describe them as such. This is because what I observed to happen in them usually was not a focus on what was covered in the module. What happened instead was that students and tutors were updated by the module co-ordinator on the activities which were to be done in the tutorial meetings. On those grounds I would describe these as formal meetings which were meant to guide the progress of the facilitation and learning of the module by both the tutors and the learners, rather than lectures.

### ***2.3.2 Tutor allocation***

As stated in the first Chapter, the module was done by students from Pietermaritzburg (PMB) and Madadeni Centres, which means that tutors were allocated in both centres. In the case of the PMB centre, 8 tutors were allocated to the 8 tutorial groups. Whilst 5 of these tutors were volunteers from the Master of Education (M.Ed) programme, the other 3 were nominees of the Department of Education where the module was offered.

Data pertaining to the Madadeni case were collected from the tutors who were involved in the tutoring of the module at Madadeni, and are presented in Chapter 6 of this project.

### ***2.3.3 Time allocated to the tutorials and the purposes of the tutorials***

As the module was run for a period of five months (from mid-February to June), tutorial meetings were held once a month. This means that tutorials were held within four weekends only. In the first tutorial weekend in February the first Unit - on Assessment was the focus. The second tutorial weekend was in March, when the second Unit on 'Curriculum' was facilitated. The third tutorial weekend was in April when the third Unit on 'Knowledge' was also facilitated. The final tutorial weekend was in May, and this aimed at summarising the whole module, addressing students problems with the module, while examining the parameters of, or concerns relating to, the examinations. Each Unit was allocated 6 hours of tutoring, i.e. 2 hours on Friday afternoon (from 16h00 to 18h00), and 4 hours on Saturday morning (from 8h00 to 12h00).

### ***2.3.4 The actual role of the tutors in the tutorials***

The tutors' role was of responsibility and accountability for the success or failure of the learners to develop knowledge and to acquire skills as intended in the module. The entire task of the module facilitation rested on the tutors' shoulders.

The above perception is based on the fact that there were no lectures in the module, but tutors were solely responsible for guiding learners in their groups throughout the course. For this



reason, I can define their role as a shift from a traditional form of tutoring which in terms of Medway's description of tutoring

*... was often used to provide remedial or supplementary instruction to students who had difficulty in learning by conventional methods or who had special needs that prevented them from participating in a regular instructional programme, or from being used to relieve the instructor from instructional and non-instructional duties (1987 :243),*

to what Hodgson (1993:123) describes as "*A teaching element which allocates a certain amount of face-to-face contact with learners, although this is obviously a small element compared to learning materials...the tutor was most like a teacher who had not prepared any of the materials*".

## **2.4 The actual assessment strategies used in the module**

### ***2.4.1 The actual assessment techniques and strategy***

As already mentioned above, the module was workbook-based. Short assessment activities and three long essays were designed and incorporated in the workbook. (Details of these are presented in Chapter 4).

Some of the tutors had to mark the three essays which were written by the learners. Typed general feedback was given to the learners. These essays were followed by the final examination which was written in June.

### ***2.4.2 Performance indicators***

A learner who had proved to be able to give suitable responses to the three assessment essay topics would be considered as being competent in the module.

### ***2.4.3 Time allocated to assessment activities***

No specific time was allocated to the writing and submission of the interim assessment activities. Students were advised to continue writing the activities on their own. It was only after they had completed the last Unit on 'Knowledge' that they were advised to submit the workbooks on which the activities were done. This means that all the students who were doing this module submitted their assessment activities at the last session of the module. However, long essays were submitted on the specified dates, at the end of each unit.

### ***2.4.4 The actual role of the tutors and the module co-ordinator in assessment***

Although it is stated above that the task of implementing the module rested on the shoulders of the tutors, it was not the case with the assessment. Out of 8 tutors in PMB, only 3 of them who were responsible for marking the three long essays and the examination. The module co-ordinator also played a major role in the moderation of the long essays and the examination for all these students.

## **2.5 Summary**

As stated above, the purpose of reflecting on my experiences was neither to pre-empt my research analysis, nor to make judgements about the object of study prior to the actual process of the study. The purpose was to present facts as they could present themselves to anyone who would be observing the progress of the module for whatever purpose.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATIVE RESEARCH

#### 3.1 Theoretical position of the evaluation research methodology

The methodology used in this evaluation research was largely based on a ‘naturalistic model’ which emphasizes the importance of the ‘qualitative’ and ‘descriptive’ approaches to data collection and analysis in the evaluation process. This is an approach which relies heavily on data from a variety of sources, which respects the variety of perspectives, and allows understanding to emerge from the process, and portrays multiple realities (Husen and Postlethwaite, 1994).

Although a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis has been used, I have, however used some quantitative methods as well. Guba and Lincoln (1989:159) argue that some evaluators combine naturalistic components such as participant observation and repeated formal interviews, with more traditional tests, questionnaires, and structured interviews to create mixed methods designs. This is the approach which I followed.

This strategy of combining naturalistic components and more traditional methods is also borrowed from Nixon who labels it an “*emergent paradigm*” (1992:4). This approach has been applied in this study through the construction of the quantitative students’ questionnaire (which nonetheless includes close and open-ended questions) (see Appendix H), and the qualitative in-depth interviews which were conducted with the targeted sources of data (see Appendices A and E), and the analysis of the learning materials. This means that methodological triangulation between the quantitative and qualitative approaches was achieved.

Chapter 2 of this project has already indicated that my involvement in the facilitation of the module contributed to the development of this research project. Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that as few conceptions as possible should be brought into the evaluation situation with the aim of letting meanings and evaluations arise as fully as possible out of the situations and thus I tried

not to allow my personal observations and experiences determine the findings. I also attempted to let the meaning emerge from the data gathered from a variety of stakeholders.

### **3.2 Operationalisation**

Generally, this is a process which, according to Mouton “...*consists of the development of measuring instruments by means of which accurate data about specific phenomena can be obtained*” (1996:126). In this context however, I was not concentrating on measuring, but the focus was to make judgement based on the interpretation of data. Therefore, in this study my findings were based on the experiences of those involved in the module, and who had been targeted as data sources in this study.

Since ‘Analysing Education’ was offered to B.Ed students in Pietermaritzburg and Madadeni, these students were involved as data sources in the study. The same applies to the tutors who taught the module in both centres, as well as the lecturers who planned and designed the module to be implemented in both centres.

The purpose of involving all these stakeholders as data sources is drawn from Stake (1975) who advocates a naturalistic approach in the processes of data collection and analysis in the evaluation process. This approach further stresses the importance of the involvement of different stakeholders in the evaluation situation, on the grounds that “...*different stakeholders may have different claims, concerns, and issues...it is the task of the evaluator to ferret these out and to address them in an evaluation*” (cited in Guba and Lincoln, 1989:40).

Operationalisation in this study was therefore characterised by the interview questions which were constructed for data collection from the module planners - the lecturers; the interview questions which were constructed for the module implementers - the tutors; and the questionnaires which incorporated both close and open-ended questions which were constructed for the module ‘consumers’ - the learners.

### **3.2.1 Construction of 'Lecturer Interview' Questions**

The construction of these interview questions was premised with the aim of discovering from each lecturer who was involved in the development of the module what principles had been built into the module. The purpose was also to discover information about the strategies and methods used in the development of the module. This involved knowledge and principles which informed the planning and design of the module as a whole - development of the learning materials, the teaching strategies, and modes of assessment designed to be used to evaluate the progress of the learners towards the achievement of the expected outcomes.

The fixed sample of 3 lecturers was targeted to be the first data sources to be interviewed. The interviewing of lecturers was guided by Patton's perception that "*the purpose of interviewing is not to put things into someone's mind, but rather to access the perspective of the person being interviewed*" (1982:161).

The purpose was also based on the intention of triangulating the responses between these lecturers, for "*credibility-check...where cross-checking of specific data items of factual nature*" was intended to be discovered from the targeted data sources (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:241).

The targeted time for data collection was June and July, after the students had completed their examination in the module. Each interview was allocated 40 to 45 minutes. And according to the plan, each interview was allocated and conducted on different days.

#### **3.2.1.1 The 'Lecturer Interview' Design**

Bless, *et al* (1995 :107) argue that a "*non-scheduled structured interview*" is conducted in a case when there is a need for more specific and detailed information which can facilitate comparison of the reactions of different participants. The types of questions to be answered by all interviewees are fixed. Whereas, a "*scheduled structured interview*" is conducted through an established questionnaire where a set of questions with fixed wording and sequence of

presentation - “...a questionnaire must be presented to each respondent in exactly the same way to minimise the role and influence of the interviewer” (*ibid*).

When guided by Bless’ (1975) advocated interviews structures, the scheduled semi-structured interview questions (which I sometimes call a *semi-structured interview* in this thesis), were constructed as I was interested in letting meaning emerge from the interviews. The interviews conducted were semi-structured, i.e. I knew what areas and questions I wanted to cover in the interviews, but allowed interviewees to talk freely with occasional prompts from me.

### ***3.2.1.2 The Breakdown of the ‘Lecturer Interview’ Questions***

As stated in Chapter 1 and in the context of the present chapter, the purpose of the study guided the development of the interview questions. Therefore, I wanted to discover from the lecturers the extent to which they implemented the OBE specifications in the following areas of the module: the planning and design; the implementation strategies to be used; and the modes of assessment to be used to assess the learners’ progress towards the attainment of the expected outcomes. On the basis of these objectives, the questions were organised as follows:

Questions 1 - 5 (see Appendix A), were intended to discover information about the origin of the module. The rationale behind these questions was to discover the initial ideas and possible influences that might have led to the planning and design of the module.

Questions 6 - 10 were intended to find out if the module was guided by the achievable intended outcomes in its design. Together with this was the intention to find out if the intended outcomes and the designed learning content were relevant towards addressing each learner’s learning needs.

Questions 11-12 were intended to find out if the principles of differentiation, redress, learner-centredness and learner support were considered in the development of the module. I based these questions on my observation and experience with the module as being among the first to be attended by post-diplomates who had been admitted into the university for the first time. This

was based on the NQF indication that education programmes and modules should be made accessible to all learners, as a means of addressing their differentiated academic backgrounds. To my understanding this implies the use of strategies which would address each learner's learning needs.

Questions 13 - 18 were intended to discover if the principles of portability and progression were addressed in the planning and design of the module. The rationale was informed by the implication of OBE that individual learners should be accelerated to new learning tasks, if they prove to have mastered the expected knowledge and skills. *“No learners should waste time repeating tasks they have mastered, nor should fast learners be expected to wait for the slower ones to catch up before pursuing more advanced learning tasks”* (Thomas, 1987:123).

Questions 19 - 20 were intended to discover the extent to which the module was considered relevant to the current issues and the needs of the learners. And, questions 21-22 were intended to find out what perceptions the module planners had about the module's success or failure in achieving its specified goals.

### ***3.2.2 Construction of a 'Tutor Questionnaire' and 'Tutor Interview' Questions***

The purpose of the construction of these two data collection instruments (see Appendices E and F) was to discover from the selected sample of 6 out of 8 tutors who implemented the module, their exact experiences with the module. Like the 'Lecturer Interview', the construction of questions was guided by the objectives of the study. The purpose was similar to that of the module planners and developers i.e. triangulation for credibility-check. The rationale was to check from their experiences, the extent to which the module addressed the OBE specifications in its implementation strategies, as against the strategies and methods which the lecturers used to plan and design the strategies and methods of implementing the module (triangulation of responses).

### ***3.2.2.1 The 'Tutor Questionnaire' Design***

The questionnaire was close-ended (see Appendix F). It comprised 6 questions. The scale used was not fixed. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out from each tutor his/her professional qualification and experience. The rationale was to assess if these might have influenced (in any way) their success or failure to implement the designed and intended OBE specifications, and to meet the expected outcomes.

### ***3.2.2.2 The 'Tutor Interview' Design***

Like the 'Lecturer Interviews', 'Tutor Interviews' were semi-structured (see Appendix E). This implies that some questions were carefully worded and arranged for the purpose of asking each and every tutor in the selected sample, the same questions. The purpose was to allow a variety of perspectives to emerge.

### ***3.2.2.3 Breakdown of the 'Tutor Interview' Questions***

All the questions in this 'Tutor Interview' were developed from the already stated purposes. The rationale was to triangulate the tutors' responses to these questions against the responses of the lecturers, and further to triangulate these against students' responses. The purpose was to discover if tutors really applied the OBE principles in their teaching environment and to judge the extent to which the strategies and methods which they say they had used, influenced the success or failure of the module with respect to achieving the expected outcomes.

Questions 1 - 4 were intended to discover from the tutors information about the strategies and methods they had used in their teaching situations, to address the principles of differentiation, redress and learner-centredness and learner-support.

Questions 5 - 6.3 were intended to discover what strategies the tutors had used to address the requirement to develop the expected skills, as OBE suggests.



Question 7 intended to find out about the relevance of the assessment activities to assessing if the learners achieved the intended outcomes. For those learners who appeared to be failing to master the designed tasks, what strategies were used to ensure that they all became masters of the intended knowledge and skills?

Question 8 - 10 intended to find out the extent to which tutors had found the module accessible and relevant towards addressing the OBE principles. This included what they perceived to be the strengths and weaknesses of the module.

### ***3.2.3 The Construction of the Student Open-Ended Questionnaire***

The questionnaire was a combination of items using an ordinal 5 point scale and close and open-ended questions designed for a fixed sample of 180 Pietermaritzburg and 140 Madadeni students who had been involved in the module. The purpose of developing this mixed questionnaire was to collect as much in-depth data as I could, while covering a large number of areas in a short time.

#### ***3.2.3.1 Questionnaire Design***

On the first page of the questionnaire, clear instructions were stated about what the expectations from students when completing the questionnaire. One of the instructions was that they had to use the computer sheet with which they would be provided for their responses to 5 point-scale questions, which was designed from questions 1 - 34 (see Appendix H). The computer sheet would be computer marked. Spaces were provided on the questionnaire for open-ended responses. The purpose was to make it flexible for them to express what perceptions they might have about the module. This implies that students would return both the computer sheet and the questionnaire for data analysis.

The main purpose of the questionnaire was to test from the students' experiences and perceptions if the responses given by the developers and implementers of the module, were reflective of students' experiences. The questionnaire was designed as follows:

In the questions 1 - 34, possible responses were A to D (see Appendix H). A respondent had to choose from the options A to D, the answer that reflected her or his experiences and perceptions of the module. An 'E' space was provided for 'other' answer, if the respondent could not find A to D to be suitable. Other than these closed options, open-ended questions 35 -39 provided more space for an expression of what they perceived to be the purpose of the module, and the strengths and the weaknesses of the module.

### **3.3 Evaluative Research Population**

The case study was triangulated between three classes of population:

1. 'Analysing Education' module planners and developers, who in this case were the three lecturers in the Department of Education.
2. 'Analysing Education' module implementers, who in this case were 6 out of 8 tutors who had taught the module.
3. 'Analysing Education' module 'consumers', who in this case were the B.Ed students, most of whom were post college diplomats, who had been admitted into the University for the first time, as a response to the NQF Framework.

The decision made for the selection of data sources was drawn from Guba and Lincoln (1989) in their responsive constructivist-hermeneutic model which emphasizes that

*...in the processes of valuing the data received, negotiation is the key dynamic of evaluation... the construction of meaning and the valuing of that meaning are the principal focuses, and the central purpose of evaluation is to create outcomes that appropriately reflect all participants' values (1989:38-39).*

### **3.4 Data Collection Techniques**

Mouton argues that "*a first general principle in data collection is that the inclusion of multiple sources (a triangulation) of data sources in a research project is likely to increase the reliability of the observations*"(1996:156). Campbell and Fliske (cited in Mouton 1996) also suggested a

similar strategy which they called “*multiple operationism*” As already indicated above, the triangulation of the research questions between the lecturers, the tutors and the students was the technique used and achieved in this research project.

### ***3.4.1 Lecturers’ Interviews***

#### ***3.4.1.1 Time allocated to the interviewing process***

As mentioned in Chapter 1, conducting interviews with the lecturers was the first step of data collection. The scheduled dates for data collection were after the June examination - the time which was perceived relevant by the interviewer, since the module had been completed.

#### ***3.4.1.2 The consideration of ethics of data collection***

As the interviewer, I was aware of the fact that the type of data I was collecting from the lecturers and the tutors was sensitive in the sense that this would expose the level of abilities and knowledge they had as far as the development of OBE modules is concerned. However, assurance was given to interviewees that pseudonyms would ensure confidentiality, should their responses be used.

The second ethical consideration concerned the negotiations and agreements reached between the interviewer and the interviewees up on the use of the tape recorder in the interviewing process. The reason behind this was that the interviewer was aware of the fact that the writing of responses might delay the interview process, and that the flow of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee might be hampered.

#### ***3.4.1.3 The actual interviewing process***

Interview sessions were done in three consecutive days. The succession of interviewees was guided by the sequence of the Units of the Module. This means that the first interviewee was the writer of the first Unit - ‘Assessment’; who was succeeded by the writer of the second Unit - ‘Curriculum’, who was in turn succeeded by the writer of the third Unit - ‘Knowledge’.

In the process of data collection from these interviews, there was a natural flow of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees. This led to the lengthening of interview by 10, sometimes 15 minutes from the 45 minutes specified for the interview. What I inferred to be the cause is that I was interviewing people who were experienced academics who knew a lot about the unit of study in this research project. Probing was only done for the purpose of illuminating particular in-depth issues.

Tape-recording was the main technique used to record data. This is a technique which I found useful in helping me to be more attentive to the interviewee. Although I tried to use a note book as a supplementary tool, I experienced a difficulty which is expressed clearly by Patton in this statement: *“The interviewer who is trying to write down everything that is said will have a difficult time responding appropriately to interviewee needs and cues”* (1982:179)

### **3.4.2 Tutor Interviews**

Interviews with the tutors were conducted after the lecturer interviews. As stated above, the reason behind this succession was the development of some of the tutor interview questions from the lecturer responses. Like the lecturers, tutors were ensured of the confidentiality and security of the raw data from any person other than the interviewee, myself, and the supervisor of this project. The motive behind this security was to develop the confidence and trust of the interviewees, and to elicit true and fair responses from them based on their true experiences of the module. While it cannot be denied that a ‘true’ and ‘fair’ response cannot be guaranteed, my attempt to achieve this removed various obstructing factors. I would argue that this strategy made them speak their minds about the module willingly, and reflect openly on their experiences. Their responses which are presented in the succeeding Chapters indicate this.

#### **3.4.2.1 Interviewing Techniques**

As I had done in the interviews with the lecturers, tape-recording was used as a tool for recording the responses. Initially, some of these tutors were reluctant to participate in the interview as they stated their concerns and fear of expressing criticism of sensitive issues about the module. Given

the ethics of evaluation research, I had to offer them confidentiality. The purpose is clearly given by Mouton in the argument that

*... one possible strategy to reduce the effect of sensitive behaviour...in situations where subjects tend to be unusually reluctant or unwilling to participate because they regard the investigation as an invasion of their privacy, would be to emphasise the anonymity of responses and observations where possible (1996:157).*

### **3.4.3 Time allocated to the interviewing process**

Unlike the interviewing experience which I had with the module developers it was possible to adhere to the time allocated to each interview with the tutors. Each was allocated 40 minutes. Although there was a natural flow of interaction, it was not as informative as that of the lecturers.

### **3.4.4 Student Questionnaire**

The student questionnaire was administered during contact time when the module, 'Theorising Education' was offered. Hence 30 minutes time for tutoring was devoted to data collection.

In the process of data collection, negotiations were entered into with the students for the completion of the questionnaire. The students who had attended the 'Theorising Education' module responded to the questionnaire.

## **3.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

Quantitative data were captured on a computer sheet and analysed statistically. Letter symbols indicated the responses from the data sources. For the qualitative and descriptive data, the researcher used an inductive approach to make judgements in the interpretation of data. This implies that comparison was drawn between these responses, the research questions, and the problem of research. Deductions were then made from these comparisons.

In triangulating the data, the responses of the three lecturers were compared against each other. The same was also done with the tutor interviews. From here, comparisons between the findings from the lecturers, from the tutors, and from the students were made. Findings from the three sets of data were then compared to the research questions and the research problem. Therefore, the findings of the study were made from triangulated data from these comparisons. These are reported in Chapter 8.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNING MATERIAL : WORKBOOKS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The first step of gathering data to be analysed and used in the evaluation of the module was the examination description and evaluation of the ‘Analysing Education’ learning material (workbooks) which was designed for use in the facilitation of the module. The purpose of analysing these workbooks was to explore the extent to which they were developed from the OBE philosophy and principles (some of which were presented in Chapter one of this project).

The module design aspects which were explored were the intended outcomes; the structure and design; the material content; teaching and learning approach; and the assessment activities designed in the materials. The materials analysed were: Unit 1 ‘Assessment’, Unit 2 ‘Curriculum’ and Unit 3 ‘Knowledge’.

#### 4.2 OBE Principles for the development and production of Learning-Based Material (LBM)

The National Department of Education (NDE) (1997) suggests the following ten principles which should inform and guide the production of learning-based material (LBM), for an OBE programme or module:

1. *A love for lifelong learning should be encouraged.*
2. *Material should promote critical thinking skills and problem solving skills as essential life skills .*
3. *Elements that promote emotional, moral, and social development should be embedded in the material.*
4. *Material should encourage the projection of a diverse cultural heritage of the society... material should incorporate environmental elements.*

5. *Where possible, material should follow the integrated approach to learning.*
6. *Material should encourage 'hands-on' experiences.*
7. *Material should provide a continuous progression of opportunities for a gradual refinement of perception.*
8. *Material needs to take cognisance of individual differences and promote learner-paced learning.*
9. *Material should be gender appropriate and sensitive .*
10. *Material needs to take account of multi-perspective, and linking of content/concepts to skills (NDE, 1997:50-51).*

Whilst I was compelled not to make judgements about whether the module was OBE based or not at this stage, until data from all the stakeholders had been analysed, it is worth pointing out that it was difficult to avoid judging the nature of the 'Analysing Education' material. The actual analysing process required the active use of cognitive ability when I was engaged in the interpretation of those issues presented in the material. This is, in one sense, the actual making of judgements. Therefore, when reviewing the workbooks from the perspective of these OBE principles, I argue that some of them really characterised the materials. But as an attempt to avoid presenting the pre-conceptions, these are presented in Chapter 8 of this project.

Gultig (1997) proposes what he calls "*Ten tips*" on "*Writing 'user friendly' teacher education course material*" (Unpublished Document). These are presented as relevant strategies to use when evaluating some of the above OBE principles in the development of the learner-based materials:

1. *Design your text around a few, key concepts.*
2. *Structure learning tightly, but avoid a one-theory course.*
3. *Work on tight conceptual integration within modules and between modules.*
4. *Set up texts as conversations, between the reader and writer and between different explanations of similar educational problems.*
5. *Design texts as investigations (as detective metaphor). This has a number of important educational implications.*



6. *Printed texts as narrative : combining investigations and conversations.*
  7. *Construct texts inductively - from problem to theory.*
  8. *Construct text in circular as opposed to linear fashion.*
  9. *Good in-course activities and formative assessment activities are vital.*
  10. *Think very carefully about the relationship between the different media used.*
- (Gultig, 1997: Unpublished document).

### **4.3 The structure and design of the module : when reflected in the learning- based material**

The structure and design of this module can be understood in terms of "*the emerging model of Education and Training*" (Jessup, 1994:89-94). In this model he argues, "*Once learning is targeted on outcomes, other features of the model follow as a natural consequence*" (*ibid*). The following structure and design reflects this:

#### **4.3.1 The intended outcomes**

As stated in the reading materials, it was the purpose of the module that each and every learner should, at the end of the module, be able to demonstrate specific competences. Unit 1 (p.2) spelt out clearly that in the language of outcomes, each learner should, at the end of the module, be able to:

- *Collect, analyse, organise, critically select and evaluate information from a variety of sources.*
- *Engage in conceptual problem-solving, make inferences, and take responsible decisions in regard to knowledge, curriculum and assessment, using critical and creative thinking.*
- *Interpret points of views of other people and evaluate their arguments in regard to knowledge, curriculum and assessment (Lubisi, 1997:2-3).*

The assumptions underpinning the selected intended outcomes in this module were that every learner can develop - within a semester, the ability to understand critically the current changes in the South African education system. It was assumed also that the ability to 'explain' and 'interpret' the content of the materials, as well as the ability to 'argue' critically could be developed by the end of this module. It was also assumed that learners would be able to demonstrate that they could apply these desired outcomes within their teaching contexts. These assumptions were made from the OBE principle which emphasises that "*...learners should prove that they really do possess the skills and knowledge which were targeted to be developed*" (NDE, 1997:20).

For the module planners, the setting of these outcomes implied planning and designing pragmatic programme implementing strategies and methods, and designing relevant content which should be used to ensure that these outcomes were really achieved.

#### ***4.3.2 The materials - based learning content***

'Analysing Education' saw the concept of OBE as centred around three major aspects: 'assessment', 'curriculum' and 'knowledge'. These were the three critical areas which the module sought to address, and around which the module was designed and structured.

The 'Assessment' Unit was designed around OBE theory of 'assessment'. The major focus here was the introduction and the clarification of OBE assessment concepts such as 'criterion - referenced approach', 'competences' and 'continuous assessment'. Pragmatic OBE assessment strategies which the teachers can use in the classroom situation were also presented in the Unit.

The Unit 'Curriculum' attempted to build the students' understanding of the theoretical issues of the curriculum, and of the concept of OBE. It highlighted the dynamic issues of the OBE curriculum, and the key areas of focus in an OBE curriculum. Within this aspect, issues of assessment, knowledge, teachers and their work contexts, learners and their learning context, were the components. This means that Unit 2 'Curriculum' is an 'umbrella' unit which incorporated all the issues of curriculum and education in this module.

The concept of 'Knowledge' was also presented theoretically in Unit 3. Theoretical issues were presented through arguments and interactions which were portrayed in the unit. Through these interactions and arguments, 'knowledge' was portrayed as a process. This suggests that knowledge which is imparted in the OBE programmes and modules should be based on the fact that learning is neither an event nor an occurrence, but a process. Learning is logically processed in the mind of a learner.

It can be argued from the 'Ten Tips' of designing materials that the three Units of the 'Analysing Education' were trying to do what Gultig (1997) defines as a "*tight conceptual integration within the module*". The conceptual understanding of assessment, curriculum and knowledge in OBE terms was largely covered in this module. Underpinning the presentation of the pragmatic OBE theories of 'assessment', 'curriculum' and 'knowledge' was an assumption that teachers would be able to apply or use them in the teaching learning situation.

#### ***4.3.3 Teaching and learning approach***

The designed learning materials were characterised by a communicative approach. The communicative approach was dramatically portrayed by illustrations of teachers who were found in their staffroom conversing about 'this new OBE' and its implications for teaching and assessment strategies. In most cases, these teachers were debating and expressing their views and perceptions of OBE. In the process of their interaction they raised problems and misunderstandings they had about OBE, which were clarified in the context of the unit.

Again, what was discovered in the analysis of the learning materials was the democratic placement of the teaching staff in the school. Siyafunda School within which the fictional teachers were located, seemed to be a non-racial school. It seemed to be an ex-DET school in which both White and Black teachers were employed. The way these teachers related to each other in the communication process was characterised by the principle of acceptance, i.e. no racial tensions seemed to exist between these teachers, they all conversed to each other rationally and with ease.

In short, the workbooks were designed in such a way that teachers who were learners of this module could learn about the nature of OBE from everyday teacher experiences. They also could learn to some extent, what implications this had for their profession - new knowledge which they must learn and skills which they must acquire and develop in order to meet these new OBE demands.

Consistent with Gultig's 'Ten Tips' of writing user friendly teacher education course materials, the three texts (Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3 ) were set up in the form of a conversation between the reader and the writer, and between different explanations of similar educational problems. This was reflected in the workbooks when the authors had 'direct interaction' with the readers. This 'direct interaction' was evident where the authors became the 'first person-narrators' or instructors of what was going on in the text, or what should be done by the readers. And, readers were the 'second-person' in the sense that the authors kept on instructing them what to do e.g. to stop and think, to stop and attend to the assessment activity, etc. It was also seen in the materials that the problems which confronted teachers at Siyafunda School were the same as those which the teachers who were learners in the module experienced in their schools.

#### ***4.3.4 The performance indicators***

It can be argued that the three long essays which the learners wrote were the indicators for learners' performances in the module. These were marked and returned to the learners with typed general feedback. Credits granted for these essays indicated the level at which each learner was coping with the requirements of the module. (Table 4.1 presents the topics of the 3 essays).

**Table 4.1 : Assessment Essays**

First Essay Performance Indicator	Assessment Criteria
<p>Write down two pages of input you will make at the Siyafunda High staff meeting. Your input should take the guiding questions into account.</p> <p>You can guide the content of you address by answering the questions in the reader (which I think might be in staff minds.</p> <p>But what I also know is that what staff wants most are the concrete examples of what this new approach means for their assessment practices. So don't make it too abstract and theoretical! Staff want to leave as more competent teachers. (Lubisi, <u>et al.</u>, 1997:26-7)</p>	<p><b>Learners should be capable of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying the old and the new models of assessment;</li> <li>- explaining the central features of the old and the new models;</li> <li>- explaining the central features of the old and the new models;</li> <li>- understanding how the models are applied in the classroom;</li> <li>- engaging in debates about the strengths and weaknesses of the different models. Lubisi, <u>et al.</u>, 1997:4)</li> </ul>

Second Essay: Performance Indicator	Assessment Criteria
<p>In not more than two pages, discuss five major differences between the two approaches to curriculum.</p> <p>To help you, here are some areas that you could think about, but they are not the only ones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What sort of knowledge is taught?</li> <li>- what types of things are examined or assessed?</li> <li>- Who is the central person in the learning process?</li> </ul> <p>Examine what these differences mean for the practice of teachers in the classroom." (Wedekind, <u>et al.</u>, 1997:14)</p>	<p><b>Learners should be capable of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying different models of interpretations of the curriculum that are use in South Africa.- particularly the OBE approach of the NQF</li> <li>- understanding the importance of interpretation and the social construction of knowledge in curriculum and assessment.</li> <li>- understanding central concepts, debates and problems in curriculum;</li> <li>- explaining what is meant in South Africa by an OBE curriculum. (Wedekind, <u>et al.</u>, 1997:5)</li> </ul>

<p><i>should be positive and constructive. Discipline should be an outcome or an achievement of education and is closely linked to freedom. Explain how Dewey links discipline to freedom.</i></p> <p><i>2. Dewey distinguishes between two sets (paradigms) in debates about teaching: subject and child-centred. How does Dewey "reconstruct" this debate ?</i></p> <p><i>3. Dewey distinguishes between the "logical" and the "psychological". The logical is associated with the subject-centred orientation. The psychological with the with the child-centred orientation...In your own words, give a brief explanation of what Dewey means by "logical" and "psychological". Use an example from your own learning area to illustrate your answer. (Parker, et al. 1997:29-30)</i></p>	<p><i>Learners should be capable of :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- identifying and classifying the knowledge and value assumptions that support different models or interpretations of curriculum and assessment:</i></li> <li><i>- explaining how knowledge and value assumptions influence the way we interpret and assess the world around us;</i></li> <li><i>- using inductive and deductive reasoning to solve problems in curriculum and assessment theories and practice;</i></li> <li><i>- engaging in debates and arguments about knowledge and value assumptions in curriculum and assessment;</i></li> <li><i>- arguing for a particular model or interpretation of curriculum and assessment in a way that demonstrates the ability to integrate knowledge, skills and values;</i></li> <li><i>- writing an essay that demonstrates the understanding of the module ( Parker, et al., 1997:6)</i></li> </ul>
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The learning materials were designed with almost 35 assessment activities, other than the 3 essays. In the 'Assessment' Unit there were 9 activities; in Unit 2-'Curriculum' there were 14 activities, whereas Unit 3-'Knowledge' was designed with 12 activities.

Although there were these assessment activities other than the essays, I could not regard these as being of the same level as the long essays. Assessment activities were neither monitored nor marked to indicate the level at which a learner had mastered the intended knowledge and skills. However, these could be described as continuous assessment activities in the sense that learners were expected to write their responses continuously, as they progressed with their learning of module.

It did not come out clearly in the materials whether the activities were addressing the OBE continuous assessment principle, were still the traditional form of assessing continuously, or were

the blend of both continuous assessment and assessing continuously. This uncertainty was further probed from the lecturers, tutors and learners to discover what they perceived to have been the purposes of the assessment activities designed in the learning materials. Findings are presented in the succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **LECTURERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODULE, AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE MODULE'S SUCCESS IN ADDRESSING OBE PRINCIPLES.**

*Useful background information can be obtained in direct interaction with people involved in a similar subject issue. Hopefully, these are people who have accumulated experience from which the researcher can learn (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:25).*

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Data collected from the three lecturers who were involved as data sources in this study, are presented and analysed in this chapter. These lecturers are either referred to as planners or designers in this study.

This was the second stage of the study. And, as stated in the Chapters 1 and 3, data were collected through direct interaction with the lecturers in the interviewing process. The main purpose of gathering this form of data was to analyse and find out if the purpose and the process of developing the module were informed by the OBE principles. Another purpose was to find out if the strategies and methods used by the module designers in the process of developing the module were guided by the OBE philosophy. The final purpose was to find out the challenges experienced in the process of developing this OBE module.

The above stated purposes of data collection were based on the assumption that, if the processes of module planning and module design are outcomes-based, the module implementation methods and strategies, and modes of assessment are likely to be outcomes-based. This belief is informed by the OBE principle which suggests that the processes of planning and designing an OBE module or OBE programme should involve the processes of:

- selecting outcomes which should be achievable at the end of the module;



- designing module content which should be used as a vehicle for achieving those intended outcomes; and also,
- designing the modes of assessment which should be used within the implementation process to monitor the progress of the learners on their route to the intended outcomes.

This implies that each process should inform the succeeding one, or, the succeeding process should be guided by the preceding one. For the planners and designers of the module, this implies using module development methods and strategies which should ensure the success of all the afore -mentioned processes, and hence result in the achievement of the intended outcomes.

Data from the module designers were analysed and interpreted, and are presented in this chapter. Therefore, the designed module content, the implementation methods and strategies, and the modes of assessment designed to be used in this module are presented in this chapter. Limitations and uncertainties of the validity of judgements produced in the analysis of data are also acknowledged.

The conclusions of the study were not drawn from these data only. These were triangulated against other data collected from the tutors (which are presented and analysed in Chapter 5) and data collected from the learners (which are also presented and analysed in Chapter 6). Findings from the triangulated data are presented in Chapter 8.

For ethical reasons, the three lecturers with whom the interviews were conducted for the collection of this data were named Lecturer A, Lecturer B, and Lecturer C. There was also Mr X - a pseudonym of the co-ordinator of the module who did not participate in the interviews, but whose name was mentioned by the interviewees. Transcripts for the interviews are appended at the end of the thesis, for reference (see Appendices B, C and D).

## 5.2 Plan, structure and design: The purpose, strategies and methods of the module development

### 5.2.1 *The purpose of the module*

*Three main*

*intended skills:*

*'Understanding'*

*'Interpreting' and*

*'Arguing'.*

It can be argued that to focus the intention of this OBE module in the planning process was not an easy task for the lecturers. This was not a linear, but a dynamic process within the broader process of planning and designing the module. This was inferred from the lecturers' responses which reflected clearly that a number of processes were experienced or utilised prior to focussing on the intended outcomes. Among these was the decision-making process whereby the lecturers could not reach a decision on the module's conclusive or end achievement. It was found from their responses that SAIDE (South African Institute of Distance Education) had a very strong influence on what the module should intend to do.

Despite the SAIDE influence, it was found that the lecturers ultimately came up with three sets of outcomes which the module should achieve at the end. Learners should, at the end of the module, have developed the conceptual understanding and skills of OBE; they should be able to interpret and argue over issues arising in the module. Evidence for this was drawn from Lecturer A, who stated,

*...we all drafted pieces of outcomes and gave that to Mr X to collate. We came up with ± 30 learning outcomes. But then we went to SAIDE to try and present this thing. Some people chopped some of the ideas down...Mr X generated ±57 outcomes when we were trying to re-work the task. It was a long list - firstly, we decided it was not manageable and secondly this tended to atomise what we were trying to do. Then ultimately we went through a process of clarifying in our minds what it is that we wanted students to know and be able to do. Then we came to the idea of 'understanding', 'interpreting', and 'arguing' (see Appendix B).*

*Potential tension existed within the OBE principle of collaboration when used in this module.*

It can further be argued that potential tensions existed with respect to the OBE principle of democratic participation, (in the process of developing this OBE module). OBE suggests that a collaborative strategy should be used by the planners whenever a programme or a module is being developed. But, it was discovered that within this strategy of working collaboratively, the decision-making about what the module should achieve at the end was hierarchical.

Although the lecturers worked as a team in the module planning and design process, the mere fact that after the outcomes had been selected by all the planners, Mr X had to collate them, and further, that SAIDE had to ‘select out’ what the institute did not want from those already selected outcomes, supports this argument.

*SAIDE had a strong influence in the decision-making about the module*

The above-stated finding further indicated clearly that the decision-making about what the module was supposed to be doing, and its declared outcomes were guided by the intentions of SAIDE.

Although the lecturers stated that they went through the process of “...clarifying in their minds what was it that the students should know at the end of the module” (Lecturer A), it became evident from their responses that the difficulties which they went through in the process of focussing the purpose of the module were caused by the involvement and the influence of SAIDE. The fact that when they went to SAIDE to try to present the selected outcomes “some people chopped some of the ideas down” (Lecturer A) indicated that SAIDE had decided what the module had to do.

Furthermore, the above dilemma in the process of selecting the intended outcomes was found to have had a great impact on the process of the module development. This created what I term the

‘tripartite potential tension’ whereby the module had on one hand, to meet the learning needs of the B.Eds, on the other hand it had to meet the needs of the SAIDE and the NMET.

*‘Tripartite potential tensions’- the module had to satisfy the needs of three groups of people: SAIDE; the National Education Ministry; and the academic needs of the B.Ed students.*

The module also had to meet the needs of the National Ministry of Education (NMET) which “...*desperately needed the module which would introduce teachers to OBE*” (Lecturer C). At the same time the module had to meet the academic needs of the prospective University of Natal (PMB) B.Ed students who would be learning the module. These ‘tripartite potential tensions’ came up clearly from the responses of Lecturers A and B, as the latter raised the fact that : “*As one of the tensions in terms of the levels, we were partly writing for the B.Ed level, SAIDE, and National Ministry of Education at the second year level* (see Appendix B ).

*Tension between a process-based approach and outcomes-based approach*

Above these tensions, the designers had another challenge of designing the module using a process-based approach. As a process, the module should enable each learner to gradually develop the intended competences. One may question given the nature of the intended outcomes the feasibility to develop a both process-based and outcomes-based module. It is acknowledged that the experiences of the designers gave answer to this question: “... *I struggled more because the module was very process-based. The whole idea was to take the students through the process of skills. In that sense, tensions exist between the process-based curriculum or process-based pedagogy and outcomes-based education*” (Lecturer B) (see Appendix C).

*Lecturers had their own goals, apart from the SAIDE and the National Ministry of Education's intentions*

While a dilemma emerged through the intervention of SAIDE and the Ministry of Education with the development of the module, it was also found that the module designers did have the vision of what the module should do: it should help learners to achieve a particular set of outcomes. The purpose of developing the skills to analyse this prospective South African OBE system was the criteria used to select the 3 analysing skills: understanding, interpreting and arguing.

The above finding indicate that to develop a skills-based module was the lecturers' purpose. They wanted to develop a kind of module which would develop in the learners the critical skills of analysing education, as Lecturer B stated: "*The rationale was to teach the skills-based course - to produce the course which would make students learn skills of analysing*"(see Appendix C).

*The three intended skills integrated other skills*

The abilities to describe, to explain and to argue were not the only skills which the learners would acquire in the process of learning the module. The designers hoped that the module would enable learners to become competent in more skills, other than the three intended:

*In fact there are three key skills: description, explanation, and arguing. But describing, arguing and explaining also require reading and comprehension, listening, comprehension, etc. So there are also language and thinking skills that underlie the three main skills (see Appendix C).*

*Each unit was allocated to each lecturer - Writing was the individual lecturer's task.*

Based on the fact raised in Chapter 1 that OBE gives power to teachers to produce their curricular, findings indicate the address of this requirement. Although it was discovered that the power of the decision-making about the overall outcomes which had to guide the module development was SAIDE-based, the designers had the power of writing and developing the modules at an individual level. The task of writing the module was divided among the three lecturers. Each unit of the module was an individual lecturer-based task. It was also inferred from the following response that each unit had its own intended outcomes:

*At the level of the content in the unit I wrote, I wanted people to develop understanding of different interpretations of curriculum that we were using since curriculum is a broad experience of both the teacher and the learner, which incorporates both the content, the process and the environment (Lecturer B).*

### **5.2.2 The content of the module**

*OBE was both the content and the vehicle for developing the intended skills*

As argued above, the module should - from the lecturers' intentions, "...teach B.Ed students the skills of analysing critically, as it was discovered from the students who were admitted into the B.Ed programme in the previous years that this was their battle"(Lecturer C).

Conceptual understanding of OBE: a primary purpose. "Analysing': a secondary purpose. OBE content was therefore a tool for helping them understand the OBE approach, and its implications for practice. It is stated also in the previous chapter of this project that when the analysis of the learning materials was done, it became apparent that the conceptual understanding of OBE and skills was found to be the primary purpose of this module. In fact, 'analysing skills' as the intended purpose of the module was perceived to be the secondary one. This emerged clearly from the following comment that initially, the module was

*... a curriculum module. Then when the Ministry of Education got involved, they were interested in the material to be an exemplar of Outcomes-Based Education. They didn't*

*say anything about content, but we thought that perhaps the content should talk about OBE (see Appendix C).*

*'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' are abstractly presented in this module.* It can be argued from the lecturers' responses that 'Analysing Education' was an attempt to blend theory and practice, in terms of its contents. The argument is based on the fact that the module attempted to integrate both OBE theory and practice, but this was not entirely successful. It was perceived by some of the lecturers that the first unit - 'Assessment', integrated assessment theory and practice more successfully than the succeeding two units, 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge'. These were perceived to be more abstract. Lecturer A indicated this:

*Knowledge, or a study of knowledge is basically abstract. I don't think you can simplify it to the types of things that one can discuss in 'Assessment' as assessment...teachers would use that knowledge to develop the abstract concepts under the notion of knowledge. Obviously some of the things in the 'Curriculum' section were abstract, but I don't think that they were as abstract as those in the 'Knowledge' section (see Appendix B).*

### **5.2.3 The design of implementation methods**

*Materials-based learning, and tutorials were dominant methods* It can be argued from the analysis done in the learning materials, and from the responses of the lecturers, that three implementation methods were planned for the module, namely the learning material, tutoring and the lectures. But very little was done in the lectures since they were designed to update the students on organisational matters, rather than to focus on the teaching of the module.

The fact that "*...the course was essentially prepared for SAIDE and the Ministry of Education...it was not prepared for the B. Ed students* (see Appendix C), indicated that the lecturers were writing the module with the idea that its level of accessibility should enable a second year college

student to understand the materials with ease. It implied therefore that materials would be much easier for the students at B.Ed level.

*Help-line.* It became evident from all the lecturers interviewed that, tutoring, help-line, and feedback from the assessment essays were other methods  
*Assessment*  
*feedback - learner* which were designed to meet the individual learner's need. For example,  
*support strategies* Lecturer C stated: "*We didn't have only the tutorial system in place, but we also had marking in place...and we also had help line. Students had all these to use* (see Appendix C).

#### **5.2.4 Structure and design of the learning materials**

It can be argued that the motive behind the structure of the learning materials can be understood in terms of the intention to address the principle of moving from the particular to the general when knowledge is presented. This was perceived when the designers had to

*...take teachers and teacher educators from where they are, and build from there the issues of 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' on the basis of what they were already discussing* (see Appendix B).

As already argued in the beginning of this Chapter, the lecturers experienced potential-tension when trying to focus the purpose of the module. It can be argued further that they went to the extent of neglecting the fact that the module was a B.Ed one, and should therefore be addressing the learning needs of the B.Ed students. This was evident from Lecturer A who made this statement:

*Remember that the course was essentially prepared for SAIDE and the National Ministry of Education. It was not prepared for the B.Eds. We decided to use the course for B.Ed as 'Analysing Education'...We did not have the B.Ed students in mind, but we knew that a great majority of them were coming from the pedagogic background , and...you*



*know...they might not be familiar with our style of doing things and our philosophy of teaching... I think the B.Ed thing became secondary”(see Appendix B).*

Additional supporting evidence came from Lecturer C who argued that students’ learning needs were not a priority in the development of this module. According to Lecturer C, the module was based on what I can term the liberal principle of freedom of choice whereby, it would be a student’s choice to learn or not to learn - to achieve the intended knowledge and skills, or not to: *“About the different needs? It is not an important issue. I think that the important thing is the student’s willingness and commitment to learn to master (see Appendix D).*

The above statement made by Lecturer C further supported the fact that the designers experienced some difficulties in developing the materials in accordance with the principle to address each and every learner’s learning needs. In OBE terms, *“..each learners’s needs are accommodated through multiple teaching and learning strategies and assessment tool” (NDE, 1997:18).* Lecturer B also raised a similar comment about the difficulty of addressing the individual learner’s learning needs :

*To me it becomes a kind of tension between the OBE aim of addressing the individual learner’s need and massification using the materials that are flexible to address every person’s needs at different levels (see Appendix C).*

### **5.2.5 The modes of assessment**

It can be argued that the modes of assessment used in the module were predominantly normative rather than formative. The continuous assessment activities which were designed to be done by the students were neither monitored nor marked. Evidence came from all the lecturers who were interviewed.

Added to this weakness in the modes of assessment, was a feeling of uncertainty whether the designed activities were relevant to monitoring the progress of the learners towards the

achievement of the expected outcomes. The evidence to support this came from the statement made by Lecturer A :

*On one level, some of the activities were narrow, particularly the initial two activities, they were too much of a descriptive type. Although the point was to ask to 'describe', they came too 'parrot-like'...On another level, the activities were fairly complex but useful in the sense that they were not in the learning outcomes...Looking at the activities and at the outcomes at the end forced me to say perhaps we need to adjust the outcomes in order to suit some of the good activities (see Appendix B).*

### **5.3 Shortcomings in the Interviewing Process**

It is worth pointing out that interviewing these lecturers was not at all an easy thing to do. I experienced some tension as I felt slightly intimidated by the challenging 'knowledge power' of the lecturers, since these were my lecturers. A contributory fact was that I was a novice interviewer.

### **5.4 Summary**

It was discovered from the lecturers that 'understanding OBE', 'interpreting', and 'arguing' were three critical analysing skills which were intended to be achieved at the end. It was also discovered that selecting these outcomes was not an easy thing to do, but it was a process which was predominantly informed and influenced by the intentions of SAIDE and the National Ministry of Education.

It was found that the process of selecting outcomes was characterised by 'disapproval' and 'approval' by SAIDE, which led to the argument that decision-making about what the module should do was not an internal issue, but was centralised at SAIDE. It was also discovered that this SAIDE-National Ministry of Education influence caused what I termed the 'tripartite potential tensions' between the three purposes of the module.

Concerning the structure and design of the module, some of the lecturers raised concerns about the 'Curriculum Unit'. There was a feeling that the 'Curriculum Unit' should precede the other units. Suggestions were made that the structure and design should be reconsidered. This indicated that the module lacked a coherent structure. This might in a way hinder the gradual development and progress of a learner towards the intended outcomes.

With regard to the task of developing the module; it was discovered that all the lecturers, who were the stakeholders in the module development process, met and discussed the structure, design and content of the module. The communicative approach was to be dramatically portrayed by illustrations of teachers found in the Siyafunda School staffroom conversing about OBE. However, limitations on what was discussed about the module development were inferred from the findings in that lecturers sensed loopholes existing between what each was doing in their Units. For as already discussed, the actual task of developing each section of the module was done by each lecturer at the individual level, and as evidenced by Lecturer B they "...*never totally saw an integration in terms of what the module as a whole was trying to do...*" It therefore emerged from the individual-centred strategy of Unit development that there was no informative interaction about what the lecturers were doing in their Units. Interaction was focussed much more on the selection of the intended outcomes of the module.

Some concerns were also raised about the modes of assessment used in the module. One of the lecturers perceived that the module failed to achieve the principle of continuous assessment. Although continuous assessment activities were designed, it was found that poor management strategies used in the module contributed to the failure of the implementation of the continuous assessment principle.

Some of the lecturers raised the perception that some of the continuous assessment activities were not linked to the intended outcomes. The initial two activities were too much of a descriptive type. Other activities were so complex that they were not in the learning outcomes, although one of the lecturers felt that these were useful for the module.

## CHAPTER SIX

### TUTORS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE MODULE

*In order to foster quality learning experiences, it is necessary to determine desired outcomes, and to create conditions that will facilitate the achievement of those outcomes...the educational process must be congruent with the intended aim (Andrews, 1996:83)*

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the six tutors who were interviewed in this study. There were three purposes of collecting these data. One purpose of data collection was to find out from the tutors what they perceived to be the purpose of the module. Another purpose was to find out the strategies and methods which they used to implement the module. Another one was to find out their perceptions and views on the structure and design of the module. These data were analysed to find out the extent to which the purpose of the module, the methods, strategies of implementing this module, and the assessment methods used in the module, were guided by OBE.

#### 6.2 Professional and academic background of the tutors

Responses from the 'Tutor Questionnaire' revealed that the 6 tutors were professionally qualified for tutoring. They had either Honours or B.Ed qualifications, and as stated in Chapter 2, most of them were M.Ed students. Tutor A was the only one who had experience of tutoring at university level. Tutors C, D, E, and F stated clearly that they had never tutored before; tutoring 'Analysing Education' was their first encounter. Although the latter 5 tutors had not tutored before, they had the experience of teaching at high school level since they were high school teachers by profession (see table 6.1).

**Table 6.1**

Professional Experience	Tutor A	Tutor B	Tutor C	Tutor D	Tutor E	Tutor F
Professional Qualification.:	Honours	Honours	B.Ed	B.Ed.	B.Ed	B.Ed
Teaching experience - School:	4 yrs	2 yrs	10 yrs	11 yrs	14 yrs	15yrs+
Teaching/tutoring-College:	none	none	none	none	none	none
Teaching/tutoring - University:	3 yrs	none	none	none	none	none

It can further be argued that none of these tutors received any form of training or workshop on the module before they taught it. Most of them gave responses which indicated that they knew nothing about the module before they taught it. Most of them also stated that they knew very little about the concept of OBE. They also confessed when responding to the questionnaire that they knew nothing about its implications for teaching and learning in the practical education situation. They only acquired OBE knowledge from reading the three Units of the module from the reading materials which were designed for the implementation of the module (see table 6.2).

**Table 6.2**

Tutors experience	Tutor A	Tutor B	Tutor C	Tutor D	Tutor E	Tutor F
Before tutoring:	none	none	none	none	none	none

### **6.3 An overview of the interviewing process**

When the interviewees were asked, in general terms, to describe their first experiences with the learners in the tutorial groups, their different responses reflected that some of them were very tense, e.g. Tutors C, D, E, and F. It can be argued that these tutors were not sure of the kind of people they were going to meet in the tutorials.

*I was very shocked. My initial experience was that I was going to be tutoring the post graduate students, obviously senior school teachers. I really felt that they would understand different themes and concepts of different approaches to education...so I was*

*very shocked when I came to realise that seventeen of the twenty-five teachers were primary school teachers (see Appendix G).*

On the other hand, Tutors A and B confirmed that they knew what they were expected to do in the tutorials.

## **6.4 Plan, structure and design - from the tutors' perspectives and experiences of the module**

### **6.4.1 The purpose of the module**

Tutors had different views about the outcomes which they were to develop in the learners at the end of the module. It can be argued that a lack of formal orientation to the module before tutoring contributed to these differences. When asked about the kind of knowledge and skills that were intended to be developed in the learners, it became evident that some of the tutors were aware of the intended outcomes, yet others were not aware.

The latter was inferred from the evidence that many of the tutors did not attend to specified intended outcomes when facilitating the module. It was understood in this study that a contributory factor to this situation was that tutors were overwhelmed by the tutoring experience at the post-graduate level when they had not been formally orientated to the module. Evidence was drawn from tutors' responses to the question about the skills which they wanted to develop in the learners:

*Tutor A: My directive was to teach OBE and the critical skills - negotiating a constructive knowledge. You can't differentiate between OBE and skills because OBE is a process related module.*

*Tutor B Critical skills. I made it known to the students that whatever they think, is worth something because if you can't think, you can't make an opinion.*

*Tutor C: ...I thought it was a postgraduate course, so students should learn to argue and explain, and about getting them to communicate with one another.*

*Tutor D: For me what I wanted to do in the tutorials was to make them engage in the materials- Getting them engaged in interaction in groups not on their own as they do at home, but to reflect on what they had learnt when alone at home into groups. To be able to interact is the exact experience I wanted them to achieve.*

*Tutor E: I was successful in developing the skill of understanding education, applying the OBE issues to current debates in the SA schools. I was successful in developing this skill because if I meet them on the street , they do bring up those issues and tell me that they tried to implement that in their school.*

*Tutor F: There is a definite notion of 'group work', 'assessment', and the idea of 'contested knowledge' which rote learning does not test. I think these skills were 'touched' quite well. The skill of 'understanding' was really achieved.*

What became clear from these responses is the fact that Tutors A, B, C, and D were aware of the intended outcomes which were spelt out in the learning materials. The intended critical skills of 'interpreting' and 'arguing' came up clearly from the responses of the tutors D and F.

When asked about the extent to which they thought they managed to achieve the expected outcomes which were spelt out in the learner-centred materials, a concern came up from some of the tutors about the impracticality of achieving some of those outcomes. They argued that it was difficult to achieve 'arguing' and 'interpreting' skills within one semester, which was the time-frame allocated to the module. What came out strongly is the tension between the time-frame allocated to the achievement of these skills and the contents of the module which was

found to be huge for the time allocated to it. One of the expressions of concern was the following:

*Students did not achieve the expected outcomes ...We didn't get time to assess and monitor their progress towards their achievement. In fact, assessment is a long-term process. Through close-observation we could see whether we were achieving those outcomes or not, but because of the time given to the module, that wasn't possible. It also encouraged proceeding to the next aspect in spite of the non-achievement of the outcomes (Tutor E).*

Another perception raised was that 'interpreting' and 'arguing' were the most difficult skills to achieve in this module. A language difficulty on the part of the learners was perceived to be the cause of the problem, as this statement reflect:

*Concerning the skills of interpreting and arguing...I think what the students really struggled with was that the whole notion of 'assumption' was really difficult for them. I think the issue was the language problem because in Zulu, they can tell you. It's the word 'assumption' which gave difficulty because such words are philosophy based, they are not articulated in everyday language (Tutor F).*

#### **6.4.2 The structure and design of the module**

It can be argued from other tutors' perceptions that the structure and design of the unit on 'Curriculum' needs to be reviewed. Since 'Curriculum' is a broader concept which encompasses other educational concepts, it therefore should have embraced the concepts 'Assessment' and 'Knowledge'.

*The 'Curriculum' section is strange where it is in the module. It is a more broad concept and confusing. By the time you get to 'Knowledge' section there is that repetition... 'Curriculum' encompasses issues of assessment and knowledge, I think it confused most of the people. They went to the extent of asking what curriculum is (Tutor F).*



Sharing the same critical view with Tutor F was Tutor B who stated that,

*Although I feel that starting with the curriculum was good, I still feel that curriculum should not be compartmentalised because curriculum is a broad concept I think the whole thing of 'Curriculum' should come first because I think that's the umbrella under which the other stuff falls.*

Expanding upon the above Tutor B's comments, Tutors E and F felt that the module was only materials and tutorials focussed; it did not give scope for further exploration of information from other materials. When highlighting this perception, Tutor E stated the experience that, "*as a person she found that the units to be taught were thought provoking, but they were not encouraging the students to go to the library to read extensively*" (Tutor E).

#### **6.4.3 The Content of the module from the tutors' experiences and perceptions**

An issue that came up strongly from the majority of the tutors is that the third unit - 'Knowledge', was thought to be too abstract and academically oriented. For Tutor C, "*Knowledge section seemed to have been a problem for the students when reading it*". He found the problem to be student - based in the sense that they had some difficulty with the approach used in the module. Although other tutors also perceived this problem, for them, this is what constituted a 'good module'.

*The last section was heavier than the first two units, 'Assessment' and 'Curriculum'. I think it's because it had to be. I think the nature of 'knowledge' and the philosophical underpinnings that were coming in there - it had to be a little bit heavier* (Tutor C).

Tutor B also supported this perception in her statement: "*There are areas that I and the students didn't touch. The area of logic was too difficult, particularly the inductive and deductive aspects*"

Contrary to Tutors B and C's perceptions, to Tutor E the abstractness of Unit 2 and Unit 3 had some impact on the expectations of the learners. It seemed as if learners expected a kind of module that would develop their skills of educating:

*...when we were discussing 'Knowledge', students were not at all interested in what we were saying about knowledge. They wanted to find out what they were going to do when they went out to the classroom. As practitioners, they wanted something that they would put into practice (Tutor E).*

There was a feeling from some of the tutors that some reading articles were not relevant to the contexts, although most of them were relevant. Irrelevance was perceived in terms of a link between the selected reading articles and the subject of the particular unit, as indicated in this statement: *"Sometimes I didn't understand the relationship between the article and the subject of the particular unit. So I found that it was difficult for me to explain to the students ...It wasn't very clear"* (Tutor A).

Another perception from some of the tutors was the imbalances which existed between time allocated to the module implementation and the content of the module. These tutors further expressed the feeling that this demanded of them to think carefully about the key concepts that needed to be prioritised. What was perceived to be a contributory factor was that students would bring into the tutorials critical issues of discussion and problems which needed attention. This meant that the time-factor made it difficult for these tutors to attend to some of the aspects which were designed to be addressed during the tutorials:.

*A huge body of content and a very minimal contact time - I think if teachers (as learners in the module) come all the way with a huge body of knowledge and a very minimal contact time, we as tutors in the teaching aspect of it, need to think very carefully about the key concepts that need basically to be taught...I think it's quite a difficult one to decide what those sessions have to cover (Tutor B).*

Time constraints impacted on the implementation of the module to the extent that some tutors failed to complete the module: *"I think what is fairly obvious is that the 'Knowledge' section was never covered adequately"* (Tutor B).

## 6.5 Implementation strategies from the tutors' experiences and perceptions

Some of the tutors were based both at Madadeni and PMB centres, and what emerged from those tutors was that tutoring at Madadeni was not easy. The main problem was the huge number of students allocated to each tutor, which was found to be too large for the tutor to cope with, which made it difficult for her/him to address all the issues prepared for the tutorial meeting. The relevance of this experience is that tutors could not address all the problems and the issues which were raised by the learners, as well as meeting the requirements of the tutorial meetings.

Although it can be argued that time was allocated for addressing of issues and problems that arose, it became evident from the tutors' responses that this was not sufficient for the large number of students they were allocated in the tutorial groups. For this reason some of these tutors were constrained from attending to the students' difficulties with the issues in the module at individual level.

*Actually I didn't find tutoring particularly easy - I think it was because it was the first time I've done it...I found myself talking and explaining too much. I prepared very well for them. That is what worried me because I thought I was spoon feeding them and I was talking too much...With a large group of 47 students I had a big problem, and that's what I think was my fear of inadequacy of the tutorials. It was the organisational problem. There were chairs all over the place around them that they couldn't move (Tutor C).*

It can be argued that almost all the tutors who were interviewed used a group approach in their tutorial groups. They perceived this to be a better method than which enabled them to facilitate interaction and debates among learners in the groups. As indicated by the argument above, that as tutors could not attend to the learners as individuals in the tutorial groups, it became obvious that a group-system was the commonly used method. This was evident from Tutor D statement, "...involving them in groups was crucial to the learners in my group".

Some of the tutors were very conscious of the fact that learning begins from the critical issues around them; as were the planners of the module who considered that they should begin from

where the teachers were, with the issues of ‘Assessment’, and develop new OBE concepts from there. For Tutor C, the issues of ‘discipline’ (which in terms of her perceptions were not handled very well), are the issues with which she started. This was a strategy to encourage them to participate in the group, as she argued:

*The critical issues for the teacher in the classroom is where the learners in this module must start. And, the critical issue for the black teacher in the classroom is discipline. We should have taught them practical skills in the tutorials, then philosophy. Actually the course is characterised much by philosophy (Tutor C).*

A strong feeling came from four of the tutors about the modules’ failure to acknowledge the values, the knowledge, and the teaching experience of the students which should have served as the guide for the implementation process. The module simply embarked on the issue and concepts of education, abstracted the background knowledge of the teachers and bought in the philosophical concepts. One of the concerns was about the ‘Siyafunda approach’ which was using the example of fictional experiences of the teachers and their reaction to changes in schools. This concern was raised by Tutor E, "*...the approach should at least be found from the learners themselves, rather than using the example to infer issues from*".

It can further be argued from the tutors’ perceptions of the implementation strategies used in the module that what the module was doing in the implementation process was to present the philosophical issues of educational change, the areas that need to be changed, but that the strategies for implementing that change in the whole teaching context were not clearly presented. In short, the module was telling the teachers that ‘what’ they were doing in their classrooms was bad, therefore that must be changed; also telling them ‘what’ to do when bringing in that OBE change, but it did not tell them ‘how’ to do it.

An example of the perception noted above is the issue of ‘discipline’ - it was felt that teachers as learners in this module were told that OBE suggests that teachers should have rational strategies of disciplining learners in their classrooms, but what did not clearly emerge from the module was what those strategies are. This came up clearly from Tutor E’s comment, that the

'discipline' issue was not handled very well: "...students were complaining that we do not give them other ways which they can use alternatively to the discipline they had been using".

Another supporting piece of evidence of the above argument was the comment made by Tutor E:

*The main thing which I think we should have started the course with was to show the learners that they had knowledge in them, instead of throwing philosophy, new jargon, new terminology, etc. We should have started by realising their values and knowledge ...In fact they were threatened, because we simply threw this philosophy and then we gave them the implication that everything that what they were doing in their schools was bad, and that everything we were going to give them in OBE was right. But what did we give? We didn't give them anything practically to hold on to. We only gave them philosophy.*

It became very clear in the process of data analysis that some of the tutors experienced some difficulties when implementing the module, e.g. Tutor A who stated that she sometimes did not understand the relationship between the article and the context of the unit. At the same time it was found that this was not a difficulty for other tutors:

*I appreciate the structure of the module. When I read the motivation from the materials on why the module is so structured, i.e. 'We teach the way we want to test', I understand the reason why the module was so structured. I think the materials and the way they are structured is a winning formula. (Tutor D).*

## **6.6 Assessment methods and strategies from the tutors' perceptions and experiences**

It can be argued from the responses of the tutors that continuous assessment, as the key mode of OBE, was the weakest part of the module. What was perceived to be the greatest contributory factor to this weakness was the failure of the tutors to monitor and assess the progress of the learners in their process of acquiring the targeted skills.

Although the materials-based assessment activities were designed to address the issue of continuous assessment, it was learnt from the tutors that those activities did not serve the purpose because they neither checked nor assessed those activities as continuously as required. The evidence to this claim emerged from the tutors' responses to the question asked about the strategies and methods which they used to monitor the progress of the learners towards the achievement of the expected outcomes, where Tutor B pointed out clearly that :

*The question about continuous assessment is a very difficult one to answer. I think it was the area of the course which was difficult. I think assessment is the biggest critical factor for teaching and learning process. I cannot honestly say that I have monitored our learners' progress.*

A concern arose from Tutors A, B, E, and F that the issue of 'assessment activities' was the key weakness of the module. There was no link between some of those assessment activities to those outcomes which were selected to be achieved in the module. A comment about this was raised:

*I felt that in the activities there was no rapport between the activities and the outcomes. There was no development. As a tutor, I had a particular vision of how to 'develop', but the activities did not allow that. What I mean is that there was no link between the assessment activities and the targeted outcomes (Tutor A).*

Furthermore, there was a perception that a bit of revision and development of the continuous assessment activities was necessary. The perception was based on the belief that the issues of continuous assessment imply contact between the tutor and a learner. The 'mutual relationship' which had to develop between these two should have enabled the tutor an adequate chance to 'diagnose' and render immediate assistance to those learners who had difficulties with the module, to monitor and assess the progress of all the learners, and to give credit on the basis of the observably achieved outcomes. There is a strong belief from the tutors that this area was insufficiently addressed. A concern was raised about this issue: "*I'm bit worried that there must be a little bit thought in terms of activities...Good activity except that it could have been more appropriate for the students to have more contact time*" (Tutor D).

A concern was raised also that the issues raised in the module should have been used to develop areas of continuous assessment. It was pointed out that there were many data-based issues in this module, *"Our assessment should have encouraged the learners to bring up those data-based issues - the justification of changing from the old system to the new system"* (Tutor E).

## **6.7 Summary**

It can be argued from the insights gained from the interviews that the tutors had different understandings and perceptions of what the module had to achieve at the end. These differences were inferred from the fact that only some of the tutors knew that the learners should at the end of the module be able to 'understand', to 'interpret' and to 'argue' over those issues.

Other tutors understood the purpose of the module to have been to help the learners to develop the skills of interacting with the written materials, hence they simply 'taught' the contents of the materials. Some of the tutors claimed that they were successful in achieving the intended outcomes, whilst others stated clearly that they had not been.

However, the fact that the method they actually used was more a 'telling' than a 'skills-developing' suggest one weakness of the module. A lack of training on the OBE skills which tutors should actually use in the facilitation of this module was found to be a contributory factor to this weakness. Above this finding, assessment methods used were more subjective and normative, than formative. The fact that long essays were marked by a few tutors who, because of work pressure and time constraint could not give an individual-based feedback indicate another weakness of the module.

Among the constraints which were experienced by the tutors was time allocated to tutoring. The module was found to be too broad for the four weekend sessions allocated to tutoring. It was found that most learners would come into the tutorials with some problems which had to be attended to. This on its own was found to be a time-consuming aspect for some of the tutors. Much of the work which was planned to be done in those meeting sessions was not done.

It was found to be a great challenge for the tutors to attend to all requirements of the module. This would have involved monitoring the progress of the learners in the process of developing the required knowledge and skills. The tutors believed strongly that the vast module content and the minimal contact time made it difficult for them to decide what the tutorial meeting sessions had to cover. This potential tension between time and content made it difficult to meet some of the module requirements within a semester, let alone develop the skill of 'arguing' - a long-term process. It emerged from some of the tutors that the notion of 'assumption' was a difficult concept to master.

The fact that tutors were not marking the continuous assessment activities, (and that most of them could not even mark the assessment essays) contributed to their failure to monitor the progress of the learners towards the intended outcomes. The tension existing between 'time allocated to the module' and a large number of students allocated to the each tutor, particularly at Madadeni branch, also constrained tutors with respect to observing and discovering the level of learning progress.

It emerged from the tutors' responses that, the way the module was designed, and the way the materials were designed was somehow confusing to other students. What became confusing was the concept 'curriculum', particularly because of its position in the module structure.

The difficulty of linking some of the reading materials to the context of the units was again a problem for some of the tutors. Conceptualising the 'Knowledge' Unit was a difficulty which affected most of the tutors to such an extent that they did not even cover it adequately. Although it can be argued that the learning materials were learner-based, and were targeted at enabling learners to develop the intended skills, a difficulty was experienced by some of the tutors when time constraints prevented sufficient monitoring of the progress of the learners towards the achievement of the intended outcomes.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### **THE STRUCTURE, DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION METHODS AND MODES OF ASSESSMENT - FROM THE LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS**

*Excellent teaching is appreciating the quality learning outcome. It is the understanding of the students, and the ensuring that teaching approaches used are congruent with achieving the intended outcome (Rasmedy, cited in Andrews, et al , 1996).*

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The fourth stage of the study consisted in the data collection from the students who studied the 'Analysing Education' module. As stated in the previous Chapters, the purpose of data collection and analysis was to check from all the stakeholders if the module really reflected the OBE principles and values. Therefore, data were also collected from the learners to find out from their experiences and from their perceptions the extent to which the module reflected the OBE principles and values.

Therefore, this Chapter presents claims made from the analysed data and draws evidence from the responses of the learners to support the claims made. This means that both the claims and the evidence for those claims focus on the extent to which the learners experienced and perceived the structure and design of the module in terms of its purposes. It also assesses the teaching and learning methods and strategies used in the module. It also presents judgements made about assessment - the extent to which the learners experienced and perceived the modes of assessment used in the module to be effective for the assessment of the development of the intended knowledge and skills.

Findings from all these data were triangulated against the findings from the planners and designers of the module in Chapter 5, and from implementers of the module in Chapter 6. Findings are presented in Chapter 8. The triangulation process involved further analysis of

findings about the extent to which the module was OBE based in terms of its structure and design, the implementation strategies and methods, and the modes of assessment used.

On the basis of the '*emergent paradigm*', which guides the process of this study, data collected from the learners were both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those data collected through the close ended questions 1 to 34 on the questionnaire (see Appendix H). Open-ended responses from same questionnaire were analysed qualitatively. And, as the open-ended questions were intended to check my interpretation of the students' responses from the close-ended questions, findings from both the quantitative and the qualitative data are presented in Chapter 8.

## **7.2 The actual number of respondents**

118 from the intended 140 students from the Madadeni centre and 128 from the expected 180 students from the PMB (Pietermaritzburg) centre, responded to the questionnaire.

I assumed that all the students who had been attending 'Analysing Education' in the first semester were also attending the 'Theorising Education' in the second semester, the time when data were collected. What was discovered during data collection is that not all the students who had done 'Analysing Education' module were doing the 'Theorising Education' module. Some of the students had de-registered in the second semester. But this reduction of the targeted number did not affect the research process because the rate of return was good.

## **7.3 Academic and professional background of the learners in the module**

The objectives of the NQF are "*to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements and enhance access to, and mobility within the education and training*" (NDE, 1997). This aim was achieved in this module. This was done through the admission of the post diplomates who were previously denied access to the B.Ed. From the total number of 128 PMB-based and 118 Madadeni based students, 51( 39.8)% PMB and 45 (38%) Madadeni-based students were college diplomates who had 4-year diploma qualifications. In comparison with

this, 44(34%) PMB and 47(39.8%) Madadeni students were University Education Diplomates (UED) and Higher Degree Diplomates (HDE) . This proves that the OBE principle of accessibility was really addressed in the module (see tables 7.1 and 7.2).

**Table 7.1 Academic and Professional Qualifications of PMB and Madadeni Respondents**

Respondents	A: 4 yr diploma	B: 5 yr diploma	C: 4 yr degree	D:HDE/UED	TOTAL	Non-respondents
PMB	51	3	9	44	107	21
MADADENI	45	6	5	47	103	15

It has been a common culture of the B. Ed programmes offered at the University of Natal (PMB) that people who are admitted at this level of study were secondary school teachers and tertiary education lecturers. But many of the students admitted into the B. Ed. Programme, in 1997 were primary school teachers. It was found that a balance existed between the primary school teachers and secondary school teachers who were admitted into the module. Almost 28(29%) PMB and 33 (28%) Madadeni students were Grades 0 to Grade 4 teachers, and 49(38%) PMB and 33(27%) Madadeni students were Grades 5 to Grade 7 teachers. And, from the secondary based teachers, only 11(8.5%) and 11(9.3%) were Grades 8 to 9 teachers, yet 23(17.9) PMB and 36(30.5%) Madadeni were Grades 10 to 12 teachers (see table 7.2).

**Table 7.2 Professional Experiences of Pietermaritzburg and Madadeni Respondents**

Respondents	A: Grades 0 -4	B: Grades 5 -7	C: Grades 8 - 9	D: Grades 10 - 12	TOTAL	Non-respondents
PMB	28	49	11	23	111	17
MADADENI	33	32	11	36	112	6

## **7.4 The structure and design of the module : The learners' experiences and perceptions**

### **7.4.1 The purpose of the module**

What emerged from the students' responses was that they perceived that there were three main outcomes:

- To teach them about the OBE paradigm.
- To develop critical analysing skills.
- To develop a positive attitude towards OBE .

This conclusion was drawn from the fact that the majority of 104(81%) out of 128 PMB respondents, and 78(66%) out of 118 Madadeni respondents to the close-questions agreed that the purpose of the module was to teach them about OBE. A minority of 17 (31%) PMB, and 35(30%) indicated that this was the purpose only to some extent, and only 1 disagreed that teaching about OBE was the purpose of the module (see tables 7.3 (a) and (b)).

When the credibility of these findings from the close-ended responses was checked against the open-ended responses, the above mentioned intended outcomes were confirmed to have been the purpose of the module. From 118 Madadeni and 128 PMB students to whom the questionnaire was administered, the majority of 66 (51.5%) PMB and 73 (61.8%) Madadeni respondents confirmed through the open-ended responses that the purpose of the module was to introduce OBE to them. The introduction of OBE involved informing and developing an understanding of OBE, while also serving as an in-service course which aimed to teach them about OBE skills to be used in the teaching-learning situation.

The fact that development of critical analysing skills was another purpose of the module was inferred from the close-ended responses when 99(77.3%) PMB and 72(61%) Madadeni respondents agreed that this was the purpose of the module. When the credibility of these responses was checked against the open responses, only 12(9.3) Madadeni and 10(7.8%) PMB

students confirmed that development of the critical analysing skills was the purpose of the module.

Findings from the perceptions of the students also proved that another purpose of the module was to develop a positive attitude towards OBE. This was agreed upon by 100 (78%) PMB and 100 (84%) Madadeni students.

Some of the respondents to the close-ended questions agreed that these three purposes were achieved. But it can be argued that an inconsistency existed between the open and the close-ended responses about the perception of the importance accorded to developing the critical analysing skills. This raises doubts about the validity of the students' perceptions that the main purpose of the module to achieve critical analysing skills (see tables 7.3 (a) and (b)).

**Table 7.3 (a) The purpose of the module - from 128 Pietermaritzburg Respondents**

PURPOSE	A answ	B answ	C answ	D answ	TOTAL	non-respondents	Mean
6. To teach about new OBE paradigm	104	17	1	0	122	6	4.8
7. To develop critical analysing skills	99	21	4	0	124	4	4.8
8. To develop a positive attitude to OBE	100	19	3	0	122	6	4.8
9. An understanding of OBE was successfully developed	78	42	3	0	123	5	4.6
10. The critical analysing skills successfully were developed	73	46	5	0	124	4	4.5
11. The ability to critically analyse other materials was successfully developed	55	56	8	2	121	7	4.3

**Table 7.3 (b) The Purpose of the module -from 118 Madadeni Respondents**

PURPOSE	A answ	B answ	C answ	D answ	TOTAL	Non-respondents	Mean
6. To teach about the new OBE paradigm	105	9	0	0	114	4	4.9
7. To develop critical analysing skills	100	11	2	1	114	4	4.8
8. To develop a positive attitude to OBE	100	14	1	0	115	3	4.9
9. Understanding of OBE was successfully developed	88	26	1	0	115	3	4.8
10. Critical analysing skills were successfully developed	78	35	2	0	115	3	4.7
11. The ability to critically analyse other materials was successfully developed	72	35	4	0	111	7	4.7

**7.4.2 The Implementation strategies: from the learners' experiences and perceptions**

It can be argued from the learners' perceptions that the involvement of the learners in the discussion groups and debates were the strategies and methods used by the tutors in tutorial groups. The majority of 79 out of 128 PMB respondents, and 89 out of 118 Madadeni respondents confirmed that these strategies were actively used in the tutorial groups (see tables 7.4 (a) and 7.4 (b)).

**Table 7.4 (a) Teaching and Learning Strategies : from 128 Pietermaritzburg Respondents**

STRATEGIES	A answ.	B answ.	C answ.	D answ.	Total	Non-respondents	Mean
12. Learners were actively involved in discussions and debates	79	38	6	0	123	5	4.6
13. Learners were 'pulled' into discussions	66	29	13	12	120	8	4.2
14. Learners with difficulties were identified	57	40	15	8	120	8	4.1
15. Identified problems were addressed	72	33	10	7	122	6	4.4
16. To present difficulties to the tutor was easy	82	22	12	6	122	6	4.5
17. Learners could contribute their ideas in the tutorials easily	71	34	11	6	122	6	4.4
31. Feedbacks from activities were clear	49	59	10	3	121	7	4.3
32. A 'master' of the unit was accelerated to the next unit	47	33	16	20	116	12	3.8
33. No problem with the time scheduled for the tutorial sessions	52	32	14	20	118	10	3.9
34. This was really an informative module	100	19	2	0	121	7	4.8

**Table 7.4 (b) Teaching and Learning Strategies: from 118 Madadeni Respondents**

STRATEGIES	A answ.	B answ.	C answ.	D answ.	TOTAL	Non-respondents	Mean
12.	89	24	1	1	115	3	4.7
13.	49	25	21	16	111	7	4.0
14.	60	31	15	6	112	6	4.3
15.	81	24	6	3	114	4	4.6
16.	81	22	8	3	114	4	4.6
17.	76	25	12	1	114	4	4.5
31.	75	29	7	0	111	7	4.6
32.	59	18	13	17	107	11	4.1
33.	69	19	9	12	109	9	4.3
34.	92	10	2	5	109	9	4.7

*(Questions 12 to 17, and 31 to 34, are the same as in Table 6.4 (a): Pietermaritzburg responses above)*

It became evident from the responses of the learners that some of the tutors were able to motivate students to be actively involved in the discussions. Some of the tutors were not as successful with this aspect. Although the majority of 66 (51%) PMB 60 (51%) Madadeni students agreed that their tutors could draw them into discussions, some students found that the strategy was used, only to some extent e.g. 40 (31%) and 31(21%) Madadeni students. There were also students who indicated that the strategy was never used with them, e.g. 15 (11%) PMB and 6 (5%) Madadeni students.

This therefore implies that, although other students were involved in the discussions and debates, there were those students who were not involved. This further confirms the fact that individual attention was partly used in the tutorial groups - not all the learners were attended to as individuals. What further confirms this is the fact that there were some students who disagreed that their learning problems were identified and addressed in the tutorial groups, e.g. 10 (7.8%) PMB and 6 (5%) Madadeni students.



### 7.4.3 Design of the OBE content and Learning-Based Materials (LBM)

Not all the students agreed that the articles in the reading material linked well with the contents of their Units, although the majority agreed. This implies therefore that there were students who experienced some difficulties with the content of the material (see tables 7.5 (a) and 7.5 (b)).

**Table 7.5 (a) Perceptions on the Learning Materials -from 118 Pietermaritzburg Respondents**

PERCEPTIONS	A answ.	B answ.	C answ.	D answ.	Total	Non-respondents	Mean
18. Reading articles in Unit 1 linked well to the theme 'Assessment'	82	36	4	1	123	5	4.6
19. Reading articles in Unit 2 linked well to the theme 'Curriculum'	55	55	9	1	120	8	4.3
20. Reading articles in Unit 3 linked well to the theme 'Knowledge'	74	35	10	2	121	7	4.5
21. Units: 'Assessment', 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' developed in me the ability to understand clearly the OBE paradigm	79	34	8	1	122	6	4.6

**Table 7(b) Perceptions on the Learning Materials - from 118 Madadeni Respondents**

PERCEPTIONS:	A answ	B answ	C answ	D answ.	Total	Non-respondents	Mean
18. Reading articles in Unit 1 linked well to the theme 'Assessment'	99	14	1	0	114	4	4.9
19. Reading articles in Unit 2 linked well to the theme 'Curriculum'	78	29	3	3	113	5	4.6
20. Reading articles in Unit 3 linked well to the theme 'Knowledge'	89	21	3	0	113	5	4.8
21. Units: 'Assessment', 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' developed in me the ability to understand clearly the OBE paradigm	98	16	1	0	115	3	4.8

#### ***7.4.4 The Assessment strategies and methods***

It can be argued that some of the students were satisfied by the feedback from the assessment activities which were given by the tutors in the tutorial groups. Almost 72(52%) PMB and 70(59%) Madadeni students agreed that their tutors gave clear feedback on the skills they had achieved.

Some of the students agreed that the assessment activities were directed towards assessing the expected skills, i.e. 70(55%)PMB and 81(59%) Madadeni students. Others agreed that these were relevant only to some extent. Only 13(10%) PMB and 6(5%) Madadeni students disagreed.

Although most students agreed that the assessment activities were useful (see number 25 of the tables 7.6 (a) and (b)), most found them difficult to understand. Responses to question 26 of the same tables prove this because only 18 (14%) PMB and 23 (18%) Madadeni students agreed that the assessment activities were easy.

What became confusing with the students' responses is the fact that some of them agreed that learners who had achieved the intended skills from one unit were accelerated to the next unit. From the tutors' perspectives, the lecturers' perspectives, and my experiences with the module, no learner was accelerated from one unit to the next. This indicates that the issue of 'progression' on the basis of the skills acquired by the learners is one area of the module which was not addressed. Those students who claimed they were accelerated raise doubts about their validity in responding to the questionnaire (see tables 7.6 (a) and (b)).

**Table 7.6 (a) Assessment Activities - From 128 Pietermaritzburg Respondents**

PERCEPTIONS	A answ.	B answ.	C answ.	D answ.	Total	Non-respondents	Mean
22. Assessment activities in these units developed in me the ability to analyse OBE critically, through writing	79	39	4	0	122	6	4.6
23. Assessment activities were directed towards assessing the expected skills	70	37	13	1	121	7	4.4
24. Assessment activities were learner-centred -I worked on my own and with my peers	66	43	9	2	120	8	4.4
25. Assessment activities were useful for self-assessment	75	35	8	3	121	7	4.5
26. Assessment activities were easy to understand and to do.	18	51	40	12	121	7	3.6
27. I did all the activities I was expected to	62	23	20	15	120	8	4.1
28. The tutor gave a clear feedback on the intended skills I had achieved	72	28	9	9	118	10	4.4
29. Learners who had achieved the intended skills in one unit were accelerated to the next unit.	31	19	27	37	114	14	3.2
30. Assessment activities were really informed by the OBE principle	69	40	8	2	119	9	4.5

**Table 7.6 (b) Assessment activities - From 118 Madadeni Respondents**

PERCEPTIONS	A answ	B answ	C answ	D answ	Total	non-respondents	Mean
22. Assessment activities in these Units developed in me the ability to analyse OBE critically, though writing.	91	16	5	2	114	4	4.7
23. Assessment activities were directed towards assessing the expected skills.	81	24	6	4	115	3	4.6
24. Assessment activities were learner-centred. I worked on my own.	74	30	11	0	115	3	4.5
25. Assessment activities were useful for self-assessment.	85	23	5	1	114	4	4.7
26. Assessment activities were easy to understand and to do.	23	61	26	5	115	3	3.9
27. I did all my activities I was expected to do.	103	9	3	0	115	3	4.9
28. The tutor gave a clear feedback on the intended skills I had achieved.	70	27	11	3	111	7	4.4
29. Learners who had achieved the intended skills from one unit were accelerated to the next unit.	33	8	34	33	108	10	3.3
30. Assessment activities were really informed by the OBE principles.	89	20	6	0	115	3	4.7

## 7.5 Summary

On the basis of the National Qualification Framework (NQF), and the principle of OBE which redresses the past education policy which denied post-college students access into post-graduate degrees, it was found that the module addressed the principle of accessibility.

The module provided a point of entry into B.Ed level of education and training for all prospective learners in a manner which facilitated progression (NDE, 1997). The fact that there was a balance between the diplomates and the university graduates who were admitted into this module indicated the address of this principle.

It can be argued from the learners' perceptions that the module was geared towards the achievement of the intended outcomes:

- To introduce OBE - to inform and develop an understanding of OBE, and to serve as an in-service training module.
- To develop critical analysing skills.
- To develop a positive attitude towards OBE.

On the basis of findings from the learners, the OBE principle which suggests that learners should develop a culture of collaboration by getting involved in group activities, was successfully achieved in this module. Learners were engaged in debates and discussions about issues which were raised in the module.

However, this highlighted the fact that a potential tension existed between the attempt to address the principle of collaboration, at the same time as the individual learner's learning needs had to be attended to. The latter had very little attention given to it. This is validated by the fact that some learners had difficulties with the module, and that very few of them could use the help line (for the

reasons they did not state). This implied therefore that very little attention was given to the principle of individual differences.

Doubts raised about the responses of the students caused some difficulties for the researcher with respect to drawing valid conclusions about the real experiences that the learners had with the module. As some of the students did not give responses to the open-ended questions, it became difficult to understand whether they were satisfied with the answers they gave to the closed questions, or whether they were just too lazy or indifferent to respond to open questions.

A doubt about the validity of some of the learners' responses emerged from the claim they made about the principle of progression in this module. This emerged when they said that they were accelerated from one unit to the next in the module. Contrary to this claim, findings from the tutors, lecturers and from my observations indicated very clearly that the principle of progression was not addressed in this module.

On the basis of the above stated doubts which emerged from the learner's responses, further evaluative research is suggested. Participatory observation should establish from the actual experiences of learners if they really achieved skills of critical analysis.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### SUMMARY, OBE PRINCIPLES, DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

#### 8.1 Summary

The aim of this project was to evaluate the ‘Analysing Education’ module - one among the first OBE programmes to be implemented in a South African tertiary institution - in this case UNP. The intention was to explore and find out the extent to which this module was based on OBE principles. Another intention was to evaluate the effectiveness and the success of the module to implement OBE principles, and the extent to which the intended outcomes had been achieved by all learners at the end of the module.

The intended purposes for this study were based on these assumptions: a good OBE programme/module should reflect OBE philosophy in its structure, design, implementation and assessment practices. All these practices should be based on, and be guided by the achievable intended outcomes.

The OBE philosophy and principles which were explored in this evaluative research project are those which relate to OBE programme/module development; those which relate to OBE programme/module implementation (teaching and learning practice), and those relating to assessment practice.

#### 8.2 Outcomes-Based Education Principles

##### *8.2.1 Those Relating to Programme/Module Development*

###### *8.2.1.1 Democratic Decision-Making*

A democratic decision-making about ‘what’ the programme/module should do, and ‘how’, is one among the crucial OBE principles. Negotiations and reaching a consensus are the key

requirements of decision-making. It is believed that the inclusion of multiple sources of information in the negotiations for decision-making is likely to bring about a fair decision-taking (NDE, 1997).

#### **8.2.1.2 Redress**

It is a goal of education policy that “*all individuals should have access to lifelong education and training, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age*” (NDE, 1994: 11). A learning programme/module should therefore be designed in a way that will develop lifelong skills in each learner, and should aim to bridge the existing gap between learners from the previously differentiated education backgrounds. A programme/module should be made accessible to all learners alike, and should aim to develop equal competences in all of them alike. It should redress educational inequalities among those sections of South African people who have suffered particular disadvantages (NDE, 1994).

#### **8.2.1.3 Differentiation**

As the means of addressing the existing differences between learners of different racial backgrounds, whose differences are due to their different education backgrounds, OBE programmes should cater for these differences. Moreover, programmes should cater for the advanced and backward learners; the fast and slow learners, the normal and the physically handicapped learners, alike. They should be designed in a way that will enable all learners engaged in them, to master the intended knowledge and skills, hence to have developed the required competences at the end. Programmes/modules should develop in the learners, the ability to “*overcome the inheritance of racial and gender stratification in the work force, and to achieve effective worker participation in the decision-making and quality improvement*” (NDE, 1994: 11).



#### **8.2.1.4 Relevance**

A relevant OBE programme/module is that which reflects an understanding that learners in South African education differ in terms of their academic backgrounds and skills. It is relevant also if it reflects an understanding that differences of educational backgrounds imply differences in terms of their learning abilities, pace and style.

A relevant programme/module is that which addresses the learning needs of all learners, and, which helps them to develop relevant knowledge and skills. OBE assumes that relevant knowledge is that which develops the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills, as it suggests that

*Progression should take place at cognitive, affective and psychomotor levels ... such that learning develops from the concrete stage of thinking, through a semi-concrete to an abstract stage, from achieving the basic outcomes first before moving on to more difficult work (NDE, 1997: 43).*

This suggests that the main purpose of an OBE programme/module should be the development of the integrated competencies in critical thinking skills (cognitive), acceptable morals and attitude, and abilities to put theoretical knowledge into practice.

As they are “procedures for engaging with, and constructing the world” (Bernstein, 1996: 55). the integrated competences are intrinsically creative, and are tacitly acquired in informal interactions. What this means for the learning programme/modules which are designed to develop the integrated competencies is that, relevant creative thinking and problem-solving activities should be designed.

#### **8.2.1.5 An Integrated Approach/Holistic Approach**

Acknowledgement by OBE that a learner is an individual, a societal member, and a prospective economic developer is articulated in the first chapter of this project. This suggests that learning programmes/modules should be designed in a way that will develop a learner in all these essential

aspects. The individuality of a learner should be developed in a way that will make him/her contribute to the development of both the society and its economy. This indicates that the consideration by OBE that, although s/he is an individual, a learner does not function and perform in his/her own world. A learner acts in the society in which s/he lives. S/he is socialized in the societal values and ethics. These influence and guide his/her way of life.

What OBE seems to promote is the integration of both the individual and social values. The theoretical knowledge, practical skills and a positive attitude towards socio-economic development and change, are the key individual learner's attributes which s/he should acquire in the learning programme/module. Together with these are social values, social attitudes and ethics which s/he should learn and acquire in the programme/module. The integration of both these individual and social attributes is believed to be a good OBE strategy which will bring about a 'harmonious' and productive socio-economic advancement.

As indicated in Chapter 4 of this project, a good quality OBE programme/module is that which aim to develop in each learner, the following integrated qualities:

- A positive attitude towards economic and social development.
- An understanding of theoretical knowledge, and the ability to put this into practice.
- Individual, social and economic values.
- Emotional, moral and gender sensitivity.
- A learner-centred approach to teaching and learning practice, and to continuous assessment.
- The attainment of the intended outcomes in the form of competent knowledge and skills.

#### ***8.2.1.6 The Intended-Outcomes***

In OBE, a good, productive programme/module should be developed from, and be guided by the achievable intended outcomes. These should shape and guide all teaching and learning practices. They should also serve as the criteria for assessing individual learner's performances and progress towards the attainment of the required competences. In addition, the intended outcomes

should be achievable: all learners who are engaged in the programme/module should develop the ability to achieve the set intended outcomes.

#### **8.2.1.7 Mastery-Learning**

As already argued, a learning programme/module should be designed in a way that will enable each learner a chance to master the intended knowledge and skills - the holistic abilities. A learner can only master the intended abilities if the module is designed and structured in a way that will help him to develop gradually, at his/her own pace and style of learning. S/he can also 'master' learning if the programme/module enables him/her to explore beyond its content - if s/he can critique the content rationally.

#### **8.2.1.8 Continuous Assessment and Continuous Progress**

Continuous assessment is the key principle in Outcomes-Based Education system. It is believed that continuous assessment is the relevant and quality strategy that can bring about the production of people who meet the required education standard. It is a strategy which gives a chance to the teacher to monitor the progress of each learner towards meeting the required standard. It also gives a learner a chance to discover him/herself, his strengths and weakness, hence to provide a relevant 'remedy' to help a learner to overcome the difficulties experienced, and to be granted credits when standards have been met.

For the stated reason, continuous assessment can be defined as a formative, informative, summative and ongoing process. As a *formative process*, continuous assessment should provide a learner with a variety of paths and ways of demonstrating desired competences. As an *informative process*, it should give a clear guidance on what is expected of a learner in the programme/module. As a *summative process*, it should grant credits to those learners who have met the required standards. As an *ongoing process*, learners should progress from activity to activity, from unit to unit, from module to module, at their pace and style of learning (NDE, 1996) (Figure 8.1 on page 100, gives a clear illustration)..

### ***8.2.1.9 Learner-Centredness***

A learner-centred approach is a key OBE strategy. It is believed to be useful in the teaching and learning as it can bring about “the creation of a culture of accountability, of knowing, accepting and acting on one’s responsibilities” (NDE, 1994: 12). Based on these beliefs is the belief that efficiency and productivity can be brought about at the end of the learning programme/module.

In order that a learner learns to be accountable, to be responsible, to become efficient and productive, s/he should be assigned relevant tasks to do on his/her own, at his/her own pace, using his/her style of learning. S/he should indicate to the educator that s/he has done the assigned tasks by doing observable and competent performances which will award him/her credits for progression.

The above statements suggest that programme/module should emphasize and prioritise a learner-centred approach which will enable learners to get engaged to challenging and developing activities. These should enable learners to achieve the above stated status. Another suggestion is that “development of learning programmes and materials should put learners first, should recognise and build on their knowledge and experience, and should respond to their needs” (NDE, July 1996: 11).

## ***8.2.2 Principles Relating to Good Teaching and Learning Practice***

### ***8.2.2.1 Democratic decision-making***

The educator should grant a learner a right to the decision-making about the desired teaching and learning approach, and the desired assessment style. Learner participation in the decision-making is the preparation of a learner for becoming an effective worker in decision-making and quality improvement (NDE, 1994).

### ***8.2.2.2 The integrated approach/holistic approach***

As an approach which attempts to bring together learning theory and practice; mental and manual skills; education and training, integrated approach in the teaching and learning refers to the holistic strategies which the educator should use when assisting the learner to achieve these holistic life-long skills.

The holistic abilities which a learner should have achieved at the end of the programme/module, through the holistic/integrated skills which the educator should utilise, are critical reasoning skill; ability to understand, comprehend and ‘use’ the learning content, values and ethics.

The holistic approach includes integrated assessment strategies. These are informed by the relevant method of assessing the above articulated elements, and all learner’s performance criteria, simultaneously.

### ***8.2.2.3 The intended outcomes***

As already argued, OBE articulates that the intended outcomes should shape and guide all the learning practices. These should be ‘mastered’ by all learners in the form of abilities ‘to know’ and be ‘able to do’. This suggests that the educator should select relevant methods and strategies to use in the teaching-learning situation, which will assist learners to achieve the intended outcomes. Educators should ‘guide’ and ‘make’ learners achieve the intended outcomes.

### ***8.2.2.4 Mastery-learning***

The mastery-learning principle should guide the educator’s teaching strategy. What s/he must have in mind is that every learner should become ‘masters’ of the programme/module.

#### ***8.2.2.5 Continuous progress***

A learner who has been observed to have mastered the intended competences through a continuous assessment, should be awarded credits for progression to the next level of his/her learning. The educator who has been observing, monitoring and guiding the progress of the learner, should grant credits for acceleration.

Progression should be done at two levels: within the programme/module, and at the end of the programme/module (details are given under the topic: continuous assessment on p. 98).

#### ***8.2.2.6 Learner-centredness***

Learner-centred materials is the recommended OBE method which should be used in the facilitation of the programme/module. These should provide learners with “positive learning experiences by affirming their worth and demonstrating respect for their various languages, cultures and personal circumstances” (NDE, July 1996: 11). The role of the educator is no longer to teach, but to facilitate the programme/module.

### ***8.2.3 Principles Relating to Good Assessment Practice***

#### ***8.2.3.1 Assessment criteria***

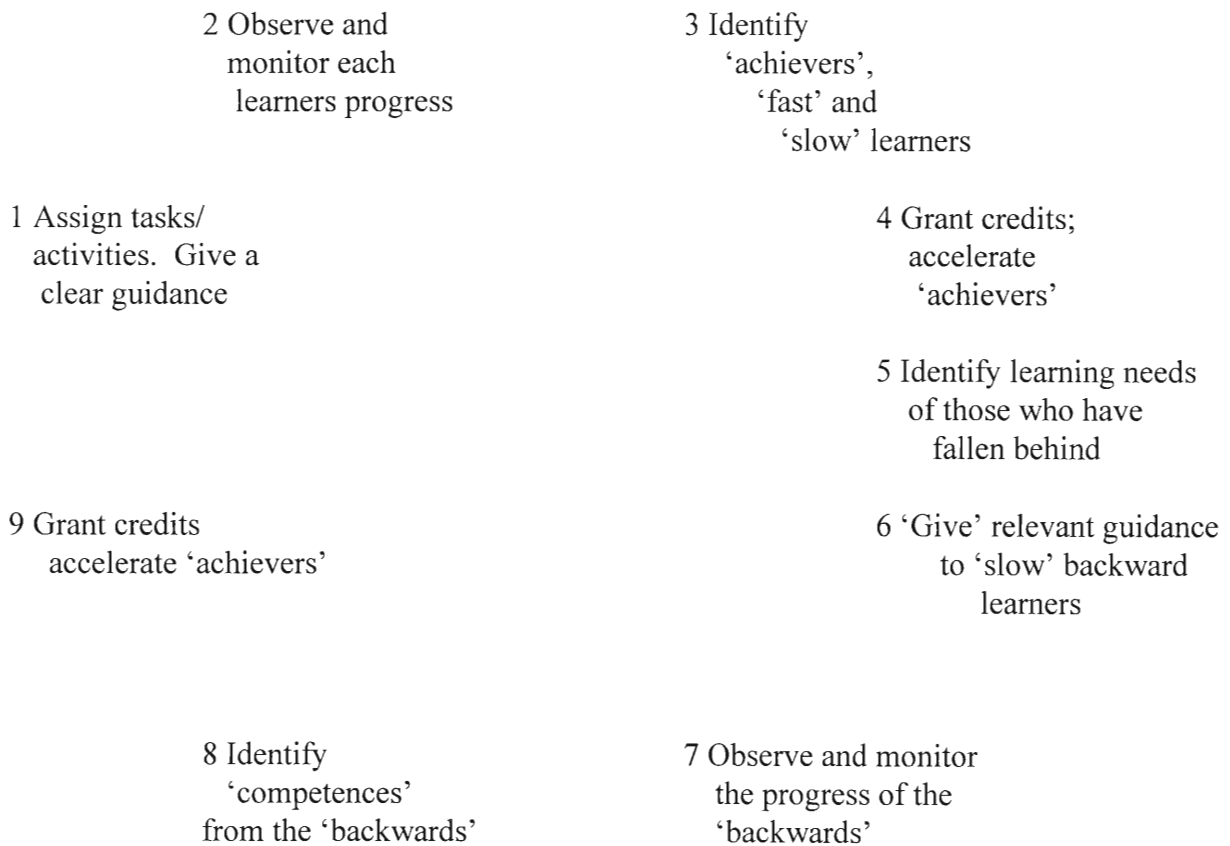
The intended outcomes should be used as criteria for assessing each learner’s progress in the programme/module. The intended outcomes should be produced by the learner in the form of desired knowledge and competency skills, at the end of the module/programme.

#### ***8.2.3.2 Continuous assessment***

OBE suggestion that “teaching and learning approach should involve the use of the diagnostic and development skills, application of the holistic approach by using a variety of resources” (NDE, 1997: 43), indicates that there is no clear demarcation between teaching and assessment. Within the teaching process is the assessment process during which the educator utilizes all the

practices of observing and monitoring each learner’s progress; identifying ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ learners; accelerating the ‘achievers’ of the intended outcomes, and giving a suitable remedy to those who are behind. This indicates that there are four main characteristics of assessment: assessment is a formative, informative, summative and ongoing process. Figure 8.1.

**Fig. 8.1**      ***Continuous assessment***



**8.2.3.3 *Continuous progress***

Each learner should continuously be moving forward to new learning tasks in order to accomplish all that s/he is capable of in the time available (Thomas, 1987).

### **8.3 The Extent to which these OBE Principles were met.**

#### **8.3.1 *Democratic decision-making***

It can be argued that the principle in the OBE system which suggest that educators become autonomous and decision- makers, is a fallacy. The fact that all other levels of outcomes in an instructional environment should be derived directly from, and align with the nationally-determined critical outcomes (NDE, 1997), suggests that educators are not entirely autonomous decision makers. The fact that the designers of this ‘Analysing Education’ module were not wholly autonomous decision-makers in the planning and design of this module, that they had to comply with SAIDE’s approval of the intended outcomes, indicated a potential- tension between the suggested autonomous role of the educators in the OBE system and the actual practice of developing OBE programmes and modules. (Refer 8.2.1.1).

#### **8.3.2 *Redress***

On the basis of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and the principle of OBE which redresses the past CNE policy which denied post-college students access into post-graduate degrees, findings from this study prove that the principles of redress and accessibility were addressed. (Refer 8.2.1.2).

The fact that the module was representative of both the post-college and university students, of both diplomats and post university graduates who were admitted into the programme/module, indicated the success of the stated principles.

#### **8.3.3 *Differentiation***

Findings from this study suggest that the OBE principle of differentiation which purports to develop a culture of collaboration through a democratic participation in the decision-making (refer 8.2.1.3) was addressed. The fact that learners of different racial groups and different



education backgrounds were involved in discussions and debates, which gave them a chance to interact with each other, suggests the address of the stated principle.

However, findings also highlighted the fact that, the address of the principle of differentiation brought about a potential-tension between the module's facilitation time-frame, and the address of the individual learners needs. Learner's learning difficulties were not addressed due to time constraints and the length of the module.

#### **8.3.4 Relevancy**

Responses of the data sources and data from the analysis of the material intimated a success of the module in introducing the OBE paradigm. It means, therefore, that both teachers and learners dwelt much on trying to conceptualise and understand OBE as a system. Findings from the study highlighted the fact that learners who were proved to have understood OBE were believed to have mastered the module, hence they were accelerated to the next module. This raised a question about the extent to which an understanding of OBE system could be considered as 'competency' and the extent to which understanding of OBE could mean the ability to put it into practice.

Findings from the analysis of the learning material, from the learners, and from some of the tutors indicated that the module presented OBE as a democratic education system which intended to solve the problems of the past. The fact that the designers had to "... *take teachers and teacher educators from where they are and build from there the issues of 'curriculum' and 'knowledge'*" (Lecturer A), indicated that the designers had to make teachers eradicate whatever interest they had about the past CNE education, and to make learners receptive to the OBE system.

Furthermore, the fact that the activities designed to address the purpose of developing the critical skills were neither monitored nor evaluated leaves doubt as to whether the module really developed critical analysing skills. And, since competences are practical accomplishments, it is argued that practical situations where learners could have been involved in the performances

from which the intended competences would be inferred, would be a necessary form of assessment of the 'Analysing Education' module.

The concern raised by some of the tutors and learners that the module simply embarked on teaching them about the philosophical issues and concepts of assessment indicates the module's failure to consider the background knowledge and skills of the learners. This failure was also indicated by the reaction to the 'Siyafunda approach' in that it appeared to be repetitive of what teachers already knew, that "*..the approach should at least have been found from the learners themselves, rather than using material content to infer issues from...*" (Tutor F). This reaction indicated that the module would have done better if the issues and concerns about OBE raised by the Siyafunda High School staff were discovered from the learners of this module themselves. This means that new issues and concepts should have been developed from the learners' practical background knowledge.

It can be argued that learners in the 'Analysing Education' module had relatively little control over the selection of the learning content, intended skills, learning procedures, the sequence and pace of learning. According to Bernsteins' (1996) 'competence' and 'performance' models, this is what would be regarded as performance because learners were expected to perform as envisioned within the module by its structure and design.

Above that, it can be argued that the concept of 'curriculum' is very broad. It is an 'umbrella' concept under which 'assessment', 'knowledge,' and other concepts are found. From this claim, it can be argued that the sequence of the units need to be restructured, considering the 'mother unit - Curriculum'. This is one way, contributed to the experienced confusion and the failure of the module to achieve some of its intentions. This concern did come up from one of the designers:

*Some people say 'Assessment' section would be better if it follows the 'Curriculum' section. I personally never totally see an integration in terms of what the module as a whole is trying to do... But I think in a rewriting there might be a need to consider this (see Appendix C).*

In summary, the argument raised from the ‘competence’ model that the selection of projects, themes, ranges of experiences, sequence and pace, implies that emphasis should have been on the realisation of skill and knowledge which learners already had prior to studying the course. This means that OBE skills should have been developed from the already existing knowledge and skills.

### **8.3.5. *The integrated approach/holistic approach***

It can be argued that not all the sections or units of this module could integrate theoretical and practical skills. Despite the ‘Assessment’ section which was found to have applied the integrated approach successfully, the fact that “... *some of the things in the ‘Curriculum’ section are abstract, but I don’t think that they are as abstract as those in the ‘Knowledge’ section*” (Lecturer A) indicated a weakness of the module in implementing an integrated approach. It further raised a question about the extent to which ‘Analysing Education’ could be assessed for practical skills.

The fact that learners “...*learn better by doing than by watching and listening*” (Petty, 1993:5) and that learning is a personal experience (Jessup, 1994; Dewey, 1984 in Ornstein and Levin, 1988) implies that learners should be practically engaged with performances in which competences could be inferred. But the findings from the analysis of the materials, from the lectures, tutors and learners that the Units on ‘Knowledge’ and ‘Curriculum’ were abstract concepts indicated that teaching about ‘how to do’ was a foreign practice to them.

Although findings from the analysis of the material proved that the ‘Curriculum’ and ‘Knowledge’ Units were presented in a more communicative and a ‘user-friendly’ way because the reader kept on interacting with the author of the text, it can still be argued that these units were too theoretical. These were communicative in the sense that the author kept communicating with a learner when trying to develop in him/her an understanding of ‘what knowledge is’ and ‘how to develop knowledge’. A learner could only listen to the instructions of the author and act upon those instructions, particularly to consider or to do an activity. These Units could neither engage a learner in practical activities where s/he could perform the actual processes of

developing an OBE curriculum' nor could they practically engage a learner in the actual performance of processing knowledge. The latter description of 'performance' calls for what Entwistle and Ramsden (1982) describe as a deep approach to learning, whereby a learner actually gets involved with the activities of developing an understanding of 'what knowledge is', 'how does it develop' and 'how it is processed'. This indicates that 'knowledge' is both a theoretical and process-related concept, hence it can only be implemented practically, if both its theory and process of development can be considered. The same could be done with the 'Curriculum' concept.

Findings from the analysis of the material and from some of the stakeholders who were involved in this study highlighted the success of the module in integrating theoretical assessment concepts and practical assessment in the 'Assessment' section. However, the findings also indicated that the assessment activities were neither monitored nor marked, and that the essays were marked by only a few of the tutors, and as such, the indication is that assessment was not actively experienced by the learners. They were not actively involved in the process of assessment.

It can be argued that hands-on experiences were encouraged, but to a limited extent. The fact that most learners claimed that they understood OBE skills successfully to the extent that they could even implement OBE in their schools, indicated that the module was designed in a way that would encourage practice. However, the module's centralized intention of teaching about OBE content and concepts in a positive way raised a question about the capacity of giving learners a chance to critically analyse the OBE system in a more rational way.

### **8.5.1 *The intended outcomes***

Findings from this study suggest that the designers' rationale was of developing a '*skills-based course*' (Lecturer B) which would develop in the learners, the ability to 'understand', 'interpret' and 'argue' critical issues which arose from the module. However it is argued that the focus of the module was more on introducing OBE system than on developing interpretive and discursive skills. The fact that some of the tutors' directives were to teach OBE (Chapter 5) and the indication that the module was successful in developing an understanding of OBE (Chapter 7)

suggest that this purpose was achieved. This also suggest that the intention of SAIDE for the module and the needs of the Ministry of Education which “*desperately needed the module which would introduce teachers and teacher educators to OBE*” (Lecturer C) were achieved.

Furthermore, there seemed to be different interpretations of the OBE principle that the development of OBE programmes and courses should be an educator’s task. Arguments raised in the first chapter of this project reflected clearly that the OBE system attempts to address the classroom based problems which were experienced by both an educator and a learner in the traditional objectives based education system. On the understanding that educators are the ones who have direct contact with the learners in the teaching and learning situations, the OBE system suggests that they should now develop and implement programmes and modules, and should monitor their learners’ progress towards the designed intended outcomes. But findings from the study indicated another interpretation of OBE: Although educators did develop the ‘Analysing Education’ module, they neither directly implemented it nor evaluated their learners’ progress towards the intended outcomes.

Although some of the module implementers (tutors) also agreed that the module was guided by these critical outcomes, as Tutor C stated: “*I thought it was a postgraduate course, so students should learn to argue and explain*”, what they intended to achieve was not entirely consistent with what they actually achieved in the module. The fact that the ‘consumers’ (learners) of the module are normally a ‘mirror’ of what a teacher does or has done in the teaching-learning situation proves that what the tutors did in their tutorial groups was inconsistent with what the students reflected from their experiences and perceptions of the module. The majority of the learners claimed that the main purpose of the module was to enable them to understand the OBE system, and some of them claimed to have achieved the ability to critically analyse it. Another purpose was to develop a positive attitude towards the OBE system. The achieved understanding of OBE indicated that much of what was done in the tutorials was to teach about OBE system.

The fact that development of a positive attitude towards the OBE system became one of the outcomes achieved by the learners in this ‘Analysing Education’ module indicated that this was one of the intentions of the module. The results of the study show that the module was designed

in a way that would present an optimistic vision to the learners of the type of education which it was assumed they had long wished to have.

The module also introduced OBE attractively by critiquing traditional CNE. This was inferred from the students' claim of their achievement of this outcome. This was also reflected in the analysis of the learning material. The development of a positive attitude towards OBE was not officially stated as one of the intended outcomes but this was embedded in the module at large. The materials-based module reflected a much more supportive bias towards the OBE system than the CNE system. The fact that the students agreed that the module developed in them a positive attitude towards the OBE system raises a question about the extent to which it would be feasible that the Analysing Education module would be understood and interpreted critically, when at the same time, it was required to be received positively by the learners. This confirms that a potential tension existed between the purposes of developing a positive attitude and the critical thinking skills. This tension suggests that the development of critical analysing skills was of secondary significance. However, it is acknowledged that a positive attitude towards OBE could be integrated in the intended holistic life skills.

The above findings about the module's purpose were also supported by the findings from the learning material. Findings from the analysis of the material indicated that the module was guided primarily by the intention to develop an understanding of the OBE system, while developing the critical outcomes of 'interpreting' and 'arguing' skills. Contrary to these intentions, tutors' practice focussed only on helping the learners to develop an understanding of OBE concepts, the ability to interpret the OBE curriculum, and a positive attitude to the OBE system rather than developing the above-mentioned skills. This contradiction leads to the conclusion that tutors were not guided by the intended outcomes in the strategies used to facilitate the module.

As already indicated in the above arguments, the researcher was sceptical about the intimation by some of the learners that the module aimed to develop critical thinking skills. It was very difficult therefore to draw a conclusion about this outcome. The supporting evidence for this

scepticism was the inconsistencies between what the module was intended to achieve from the designers' intentions, and what it actually achieved from the tutors and students' perspectives.

Other than the above stated inconsistencies, some of the tutors frankly stated that they failed to meet the intended 'interpreting' and 'arguing' outcomes which they assumed was caused by language difficulties - students were battling with the whole notion of 'assumption'. Another piece of supporting evidence was the intimation by some of the tutors that they did not get time to assess and monitor the progress of the module towards the achievement of the outcomes.

Findings from the students indicated very clearly that, development of a positive attitude towards the OBE system was acquired by the learners of this module. The development of a positive attitude towards OBE was not officially stated as an outcome of the module, but this was embedded not in the learning material alone, but in the module at large. The materials-based module reflected a much more supportive bias towards the OBE system than the CNE system.

What also emerged clearly is that the intention of the lecturers was to design a module that would present OBE as both the system and a vehicle for developing the intended skills. Therefore, the learner-based materials were designed to serve this purpose. But an understanding was gained from the students' perceptions that some gaps existed between the OBE content and the reading articles which were designed in these Unit-based materials.

### ***8.3.7 Continuous assessment, mastery learning and continuous progress principles***

Findings from this study maintain that some forms of assessment used in the module were characterised by what I shall term a *non-formative linear process of assessment*, yet others can be termed the less *formative cycling process of assessment*. Nothing was found to be what I shall term the *formative recycling assessment process*. (See Fig. 8.1)

*A non-formative linear assessment process* was utilised in that the designed assessment activities moved directly from the designer where they were set, to the learner who had to write. No follow

up was made in terms of ‘diagnosing’ individual learners with difficulties, nor allocating relevant credits to those who had achieved the required standards, as these were not marked.

*A less-formative cycling assessment process* was inferred from the findings in the sense that, the writing of essays was the only form of assessment which was found to be characterised by the giving of *one common or general feedback* to all the learners as if they all experienced the same problems. Essays moved from their designers to the learners who had to write; to the tutors ( for marking and diagnosing those learners with difficulties); to the co-ordinator (for the moderation of credits); from the co-ordinator back to the learner. General feedback was given to all learners. This means that the three tutors who had to mark assessment essays of almost 350 students (PMB and Madadeni inclusive), had the task of developing a common feedback which would address the difficulties experienced by the learners in the module. The above indicates the extent to which assessment was found to be more summative than formative. This further indicates that assessment was more performance-based than competency-based.

Contrary to the above process, OBE would suggest what I have termed a *formative re-cycling assessment process*. When recycling, it would mean that assessment activities would move from the designer who had set them, to the learner to write, to the tutor to mark. Marking should involve ‘diagnosing’ and giving clear guidelines to a learner at the individual level.

The intended knowledge and skills should serve as the criteria for assessing the learner’s progress to ensure that his/her performance would improve. Then a continuous interaction should occur between the educator and a learner as individual where the educator ‘diagnoses’ and guides the learner towards the intended outcomes. This continuous interaction should develop the learner towards the desired level of competency. This means therefore that modes of assessment used in this module were not as formative as the OBE system suggests they should be.

The fact that no learning-needs assessment was done prior to the development and implementation of the module, and that no proper assessment was done in the form of monitoring the gradual development of each learner towards the pursuit of the intended outcomes, indicated a weakness of the module in addressing the OBE principle of continuous assessment. As



suggested by Jessup in his “*Emerging Paradigm of Education and Training*” - “*Skills and knowledge which the prospective learners and their advisers already possess should be assessed, before embarking on any programme*” (1994:54), findings from this study implied the failure of the module to address this principle.

### **8.3.8 Learner-centredness**

The fact that tutoring and learning materials were the methods used to facilitate this module has been stated repeatedly in the presentation of the above arguments. Responses from the students indicated the approval of the tutoring method.

The strategies of developing learner-centred material, tutoring and help-line facility could be relevant for the purpose of addressing the learning needs of the individual learners, only if these were designed with an articulate and consistent purpose of what they had to do, and how. The ‘tripartite potential tension’ experienced by the designers of the module when they had to develop a module which would address the SAIDE needs and the needs of the Ministry of Education, at the same time address the learning needs of the B.Ed students, suggested that to include individual differences and learning needs of the learners, would prove to be a challenging practice.

Findings from the learners indicated that not all learners with learning difficulties were identified, and yet some of their learning difficulties were not clearly addressed, yet they did have difficulties. This is further supported by the indication that there was no consideration that some learners could ‘master’ some units quicker than others.

It is acknowledged that some critiques would argue that the learning material was designed to be learner-centred so as to enable each learner to progress freely from activity to activity, at his pace and style of learning. But the mere fact that the module was designed in a way that would not encourage those learners who could master the content quicker than others, to explore beyond the material based module content indicated the limited scope of the module. The scope was limited in terms of developing additional, related knowledge and ability to “*collect, analyse,*

*organise, critically select and evaluate information from a variety of sources*” (Lubisi, 1997: 2), yet this was one of the intended outcomes.

What also emerged clearly is that the intention of the lecturers was to design a module that would present OBE as both the system and as a vehicle for developing the intended skills. Therefore, the learner-based material was designed to serve this purpose. But an understanding was gained from the student’s perceptions that some gaps existed between the OBE content and the reading articles which were designed in the unit-based materials.

Although the evaluator could not find any weakness in the selected reading articles when analysing materials, it is worth pointing out that some of the tutors and the students claimed that there was no link between some of the reading articles and the module context. Although this does not mean to undermine the capacity of the tutors and the learners, the fact that tutors were not trained, and that the majority of the learners were the product of rote-learning received from the colleges of education, raises doubts about their capacity to see the link between the content and the reading articles.

## **8.4 The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Module**

### **8.4.1 The Strengths of the Module**

#### ***8.4.1.1 The techniques used in the module implementation***

On the grounds that learners were happy with the tutoring method as they claimed that it enabled them to understand and conceptualise the module content and concepts, it can be argued that tutoring was a successful method used for the facilitation for this module. This method enabled learners a chance to get engaged in the interaction activities, hence to conceptualise the learning content.

Above the tutoring method, workbooks were learner-centred. They were not designed to be taught, but learners could work on their own either at individual or at peer-group level. Evidence

to this is expounded by the large number of learners, who claimed to have understood and conceptualised the OBE system. However, it can be argued that there were some areas of weakness in these techniques, and these are presented under 8.4.2.

#### ***8.4.1.2 An interactive approach***

Findings indicated the success of the module in addressing the principle of learner-centredness in the learning material. The materials were characterised much by the communicative approach. The dramatic illustrations portrayed by fictional teachers at Siyafunda School were very effective in letting learners understand the OBE system and its implications for practice. Although it can be argued that these illustration presented OBE in a bias way in the sense that they critiqued CNE and supported OBE, it can be argued, however, that the purpose was to make learners understand the good to be brought by OBE, as a relief from the unfair CNE system, hence to make learners accept the change in education. So, the learning materials were relevant to addressing the purpose of introducing OBE system to the learners, through a communicative, friendly approach.

#### ***8.4.1.3 Redress of education differences***

Findings intimated a success of the B.Ed at large, in redressing the legacies of the CNE system. The existed balances between the post-graduate university students and the ex-college diplomats who were in the ‘Analysing Education’ proved this success. Above that, the culture that B.Ed programme, should be designed in a way that would make them address the learning needs of the secondary school based teachers and college lecturers, was eradicated. Evidence to this was a balance which existed between teachers from secondary schools and those who were primary schools-based.

### **8.4.2 The Weaknesses of the Module**

The results of this study suggest to me that there are a number of critical reasons which were the cause of what the module was designed to do, and what it actually did - what it was intended to achieve, and what it actually achieved:

#### ***8.4.2.1 The tripartite-potential tension***

The fact that the module was designed to meet three main aims: the needs of SAIDE; the needs of the Ministry of Education and the learning needs of the B.Ed students, confused the focus of the module. This confusion was expressed both in the design of the module and in the module's implementation process.

Although the module designers had a vision of developing a skills-based module, the intervention of the external forces complicated their vision. I believe this led to the weaknesses of the module such as the lack of link between the assessment activities and the module's intended outcomes. Lack of autonomy of the module designers in the decision-making about what the module should do was found to be a contributory factor to this. The SAIDE's control over the module had a great impact on what the module actually did, and what it achieved at the end.

#### ***8.4.2.2 Time-constraint***

Findings indicated that there was a tension between the duration of the module implementation and the voluminous module content. Time-constraint was found to be the cause of that situation. Evidence is drawn from Chapter 6 which presents the feelings expressed by the tutors of the module about the module's vast content quantity which could not be covered within the minimal contact time.

Findings further indicated that time-constraint factor had a great impact on the tutor's failure to address the principle of differentiation in the tutorial groups. I acknowledge the fact that critiques would argue that a help-line was set aside to address the principle of differentiation. But, when bringing into light the fact that learners in the module were part-time students and at the same time full-time workers, and that the help-line was operating at the awkward times when some of them were still at their work situations (which predominantly had no telephones) and others were still on their way to attend other modules, I argue that help-line was not the effective method to rely on for the address of the learners' learning needs. This is supported by the fact

that most learners did not use a help-line, yet findings indicated that most learners had difficulties with the module.

#### ***8.4.2.3 Lack of tight integration between units***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> unit of the module ('Knowledge') expresses a clear implication for learning practice: knowledge which is reflected by the OBE programmes/modules should be based on the fact that learning is neither an event nor an occurrence, but it is a process. Learning is logically processed in the mind of a learner. But contrary to this expression, findings indicated that the structure of the 'Analysing Education' lacked logic. The structure of the units: Assessment → Curriculum → Knowledge impacted on the failure of the tutors to develop both the required knowledge and skills in the learners.

Because of the awkward position of the broad 'Curriculum' section and the heavier nature of knowledge and philosophical underpinnings that were coming into the 'Knowledge unit' (see Chapter 6), some tutors could find themselves caught in a 'trap' and 'challenge' of "*talking and explaining too much ... spoonfeeding learners*" (Tutor C). This indicates that the structure of the module had an impact on what the tutors did in the module: the facilitation of the intended OBE knowledge, and a less focus on the development of the intended skills.

#### ***8.4.2.4 A challenge of integrating theory and practice***

Findings indicated that a module's attempt to blend an OBE theory and practice was, to some extent, a success because learners did understand from the module content, the implications for practice.

However, findings also indicated that to blend theory and practice in this module was not entirely successful. A great challenge was experienced in the 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' sections. When guided by the fact that 'curriculum' and 'knowledge' concepts are basically abstract in nature, the designers were caught up, hence they theorised these two units. Putting them into practice was a bit difficult task. Evidence to the perceived challenge could be inferred from all

the stakeholders who were in the module that these units: Knowledge and Curriculum were abstract.

#### ***8.5.2.5 Lack of tutor-training***

The fact that 90% of the tutors intimated that they were being exposed to the module for the first time when they had to tutor it, and that they were neither trained nor evaluated their effectiveness and competency in facilitating the module, suggested that tutors of this module were not sufficiently equipped. Tutors had still a challenge of conceptualising and understanding OBE systems and its implications for practice before they could be fit for facilitating the module. It is the mastery of these skills that should determine whether the tutor should facilitate the module. For this reason, it can be argued that the holistic approach had eluded the designers. Thus capacity building which is vital in achieving competences through the set outcomes was ignored.

#### ***8.4.2.6 Poor management of assessment activities***

The module was found to be weak in addressing the holistic approach in the assessment activities. The fact that the assessment activities were paper-based only, and that they were neither marked nor monitored, indicate the weakness of the module. When I review the fact that assessment activities were learner-centred, that learners had to do these on their own, at individual or at peer group level, there is no evidence that learners who were accelerated to the next module had really achieved the intended outcomes. The fact that the activities were not marked indicated the ineffectiveness of the module in addressing the principles of continuous assessment, mastery-learning and continuous progress principles. (See Fig. 8.1 and 8.3.7).

#### ***8.4.2.7 Illogical design of the assessment activities***

The fact that there was no rapport between the activities and the outcomes, that there was no link between these which would allow a vision for developing a learner (Tutor A), indicates another weakness of the module. Assessment activities were found to be illogical for the gradual and logical development of the ability to critically understand learning content, to argue and to think creatively. Above that, assessment activities could not give learners a chance to collect, analyse, organise, critically select and evaluate information from a variety of sources (see Chapter 4) as the module did not give learners a chance to explore beyond its content.

#### ***8.4.2.8 The setting-up of the ambitious intended outcomes***

The assumption that every learner could develop - within a period of five months, the ability to engage in conceptual problem-solving, make inferences, and take responsible decisions in regard to knowledge, curriculum ... using critical and creative thinking (see Chapter 4), and that learners would perform efficiently in these by the end of the module, was a fallacious assumption.

Findings indicated very clear that the majority of learners who were doing the module were coming from the previously disadvantaged education system - the diplomats and post-graduates. It was highlighted that the kind of education they had received was CNE in character: it emphasized rote-learning rather than critical and creative thinking skills. Above that, learners in this module had still a challenge to understand English (the medium of instruction) first (see Chapter 6), before they could learn to critically analyse the module's content and to master the creative thinking skill. These should form the basis of learning to take responsible decisions in regard to knowledge and curriculum, as the module intended. Since this suggest the process through which the learner should go before reaching for the achievement of the intended outcomes, it is argued that both the learners and the module facilitator had a lot of work to do. The intended outcomes were on a very large scale. They required a lot of work to be carried out successfully before they could be achieved. A lot of work required sufficient time to be available for both the learner and the tutor in order to help each other through the process of learning.

## 8.5 Understandings Reached

We have studied one of the early attempts to introduce a module that teaches and attempts to model OBE. We have noted the areas in which the module succeeded (the strengths of the module), and the areas in which it failed (the weaknesses of the module) to implement the OBE principles, and the contributory factors to these.

What the project demonstrates is that, designing and implementing OBE is very demanding and time consuming. One might question given a situation in which resources are limited, whether any one module can possibly meet all the principles of OBE.

Another demonstration are the tensions which exist between some OBE principles and the actual OBE practice. Among these is the tension between the principle of differentiation which articulates the need that learners should be developed the intended knowledge and skills in the programme/module, at the same time when the programme/module is expected to have achieved this within a specific time frame.

Above these is the tension which exists between a process-based approach and an outcomes-based approach in the design of a module/programme. Using these two approaches simultaneously, with the hope to achieve one's goals, is not feasible. The outcomes of this module proved this.

To eradicate rote-learning and to reproduce programme/module content - the already internalised styles of learning is very challenging, particularly if a time factor does not allow for eradicating these learning styles. Learners from CNE system backgrounds tend to master the content of the programme/module rather than to develop the challenging intended skills.

Above that, pre-specifying the outcomes with the hope to achieve holistic abilities is a great challenge. To develop the critical and creative thinking skills, the ability to analyse, organise, critically select and evaluate information from a variety of sources is difficult to achieve if the



programme/module is limited to one-semester period. This tends to prevent learners from working at their pace and style, hence they ultimately fail to achieve the intended outcomes.

Selecting and designing the modes of assessment which are relevant and specific to diagnosing every learner's progress in the programme/module is a challenge. This requires a clear understanding of the psychological functioning of a learner's mind, i.e. how 'knowledge is processed in the mind' and 'how learning occurs' (see Chapter 1, p. 6). This should form the basis for developing the assessment activities. Concurrent with this understanding is the fact that, assessing and crediting learners only for the achieved knowledge and skills is both challenging and time consuming.

It is not a feasible practice to take the individual learner's learning needs into account across a mass-based education system. The OBE articulation that programmes should be open to all learners alike, has encouraged great influx of learners from the previously disadvantaged education into these OBE programmes. This brings a challenge (to the programme facilitators) to ensure that every learner succeeds, at the time when these facilitators are expected to have achieved these within a specified time frame.

From all the understandings reached in this project, it can be suggested that, it is necessary to organise relevant resources in order that an OBE programme/module is implemented successfully. This suggest that, if the tutors are to be used for the programme facilitation, it is essential that they are well educated and trained. Tutors should understand the programme/module content, and its intentions and should have relevant skills to use in the teaching of the programme/module. This suggest that tutors should be evaluated first to find out if they really are fit for the facilitation of the module.

Above that, the intended outcomes should be achievable - these should not hinder the implementation and the achievement of the goals of the module. The programme designers should have the intended outcomes in mind. The intended outcomes should guide the design of the programme/module. These should inform the selection and design of the relevant teaching methods, relevant assessment methods and assessment activities.

From the findings of the study and from the above understandings gained from this study, I would suggest that a further study is undertaken to explore the extent to which the learners produced by this module really achieved the skills of ‘interpreting’ and ‘arguing’.

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## APPENDIX A

### A 'LECTURER INTERVIEW'

#### NON-SCHEDULED, SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR EVALUATING THE 'ANALYSING EDUCATION' PROGRAMME

#### A. THIS SECTION TRIES TO DISCOVER FACTS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF THE MODULE- 'ANALYSING EDUCATION'.

1. Was the idea introduced from inside or outside the Department?
2. Were you involved when the idea was initiated ?
3. After the time you got involved, what was the next step?
4. How long did it take to embark on the next step after initiation?
5. What was the specified rationale for the introduction of this programme?

#### B. THESE QUESTIONS TRY TO DISCOVER INFORMATION ABOUT PLANNING, DESIGNING, WRITING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME.

6. Is there a stage when you consulted with the prospective B.Ed students in order to diagnose and identify their learning needs?

If 'Yes':

- 6.1 What there their common needs ?

If 'No':

- 6.2 What served as the criteria for the development of this module?

7. What specific outcomes did you decide upon that the programme should help students to demonstrate?
8. When structuring this programme, why did you choose to divide it into 3 units:  
Assessment -----> Curriculum -----> Knowledge?

9. To what extent did you find the design: 'Assessment----->Curriculum----> and Knowledge' relevant towards assessing if prospective learners achieved the expected outcomes?

10. Did you have in mind the tutorial environments i.e. settings, when designing the module?

**C. THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF LEARNER-CENTREDNESS IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THE MODULE.**

11. Did you consider training the prospective tutors in the use of Outcomes Based Education strategies and methods?

12. What strategies and methods did you plan to use for monitoring and ensuring that the tutorial environments addressed the OBE specifications?

**D THE ADDRESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PORTABILITY AND PROGRESSION IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THIS MODULE?**

13. In your planning and design of the module, what skills did you want each learner to have achieved at the end of the module?

14. What modes of assessment did you design to be used in the module?

15. What criteria did you use to select those modes of assessment?

16. What differences would you say there were between the assessment methods to be used in this module and the traditional norm-referenced assessment?

1.17 Comment on the relevance of the assessment methods activities in the unit you designed to assess each student's level of mastering the expected skills.

18. Outcomes Based Education suggests that each learner should be accelerated at his or her own pace of mastering the targeted skills in the programme or module:

To what extent did you consider this principle when planning and designing this module?

**E THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF RELEVANCE IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THE MODULE:**

19. To what extent would you say the reading articles you selected for the unit you wrote for this module are relevant to the content of this module?
20. To what extent would you say that the reading articles are relevant towards addressing the OBE specifications or philosophy?

**F PERCEPTIONS OF THE MODULE IN ATTAINING THE SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:**

21. Do you think the module has been successful in helping the learners who have been credited for this module to master the expected skills?
22. What have you observed to be the strengths and the weaknesses of this module in its:
- 22.1 Planning and design?
  - 22.2 Actual implementation methods and strategies ?
  - 22.3 Actual assessment strategies used?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION**

## APPENDIX B

### LECTURER 'A' INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

*Interviewee 'A' - Cassette 1*

**Q** Where did it begin? Who originated the idea about the origin of the module - 'Analysing Education'?

**A** The module originated from SAIDE (South African Institute for Distance Education), based in Braamfontein. This project is called the '*Study of Education Series*'. This module was part of that study. It was also going to form part of *pilot* initiated by SAIDE in conjunction with the National Department of Education. That pilot had two tasks:

1. To introduce teacher educators to OBE; and,
2. to provide an exemplar of materials produced using the philosophy of OBE.

In a sense, it had a *double purpose*. Although in the beginning it was not clear as to what the 'mandate' was. Ultimately, the double purpose of this course was realised.

**Q** What was the Rationale of developing this module?

**A** We were requested by Mr X, who is the lecturer here, but who is on secondment to SAIDE for two years. Mr X asked Lecturer B, Lecturer C and myself to form part of a team to write this module. He asked me specifically to write the part of 'Assessment' because I was very much interested in 'Assessment'. I was teaching 'Assessment' here. So, Lecturer B was going to write the part of the 'Curriculum' because he is more familiar with 'Curriculum'. And Lecturer C was going to write the 'Knowledge' section as a philosopher who is concerned about the issues of 'Knowledge' - 'How knowledge is constructed'. We ultimately divided ourselves into that division of labour, and Mr X was going to act as an editor, as he did at the end.

**Q** Why did you choose the sequence Assessment-Curriculum-Knowledge?

**A.** The original text started with - 'Knowledge' - 'Curriculum' - 'Assessment'. But when we sat down and brain-stormed, we realised that if we start with 'Knowledge', few people in the second year of their study will understand anything because when you talk about knowledge, you are talking about abstract issues. Then we suspected that students may not understand a thing and decided that we will start with 'Curriculum', then 'Assessment' and concluding with 'Knowledge'. But sometime during our discussion

we realised that issues of 'Curriculum' *per se*, were not the key issues at that time - broadly. What was troubling teachers and teacher educators at that time was the notion of 'Continuous Assessment', and therefore we said : Let's take teachers and teacher educators from where they are - wanted to address their interests -, and build up from there, the issues of 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' on the basis of what they were then discussing.

**Q** Why are 'Knowledge' and 'Curriculum' Units abstract rather than practical?

**A** 'Knowledge', or study of 'Knowledge', I believe is basically abstract. I don't think you can simplify it to the types of things that one can discuss in 'Assessment' as assessment. What Lecturer C did - I think he did very successfully, was to link what Lecturer B and I had already spoken about under 'Curriculum' and 'Assessment', trying to bring ideas from 'Assessment' and 'Curriculum'. From 'Knowledge', teachers would use that knowledge to develop *abstract concepts* under the notion of 'Knowledge'. 'Curriculum' is a further step in abstraction from 'Assessment' section where Lecturer A dealt with curriculum interpretation, hence, from *description* (Lecturer A) to *interpretation* (Lecturer B) to *argument* (Lecturer C). Obviously, some of the things in Lecturer A's section were fairly abstract, though not as abstract as those in Lecturer C's section. But it was a sort of development. The aim was to start with a simple idea in a form of a 'caricature' and later on, as we were going through the module, to show students that things are not as simple as they have been said priorly. To show them that a simple idea could have many complexities within it, and that progression through 'Assessment' to 'Curriculum' to 'Knowledge' was an attempt to do precisely that.

**Q** Is there a stage when you consulted with the prospective B.Ed students in order to 'diagnose' their specific learning needs?

**A** No, we didn't do that. Remember that the course was essentially prepared for SAIDE and the National Department of Education. *It was not prepared for the B. Eds.* We decided to use the course for the B.Ed as 'Analysing Education'. The initial conceptualisation of 'Analysing Education', as thought of by Lecturer C, was not this module. This *module was essentially a SAIDE module.* It was only decided midway through the process that the module would be used as 'Analysing Education'.

**Q** What criteria did you use to identify B.Ed students' learning needs?

**A** This is a difficult one because, as I said, it was a SAIDE thing, *we did not have the B.Ed students in mind*, but we knew that a great majority would be becoming from the pedagogic background. And, you know - they might not be familiar with our style of doing things and our philosophy of teaching. So, we were obviously building this course towards a disposition - A disposition where students would be willing and

be able to try to make sense of their own practice through fieldwork. And I don't think it would be possible to get the B.Ed students since the admission was still in process. Pragmatically, that was impossible.

**Q How long did it take you to write this module?**

**A** We started this towards the end on September. We wrote through to February, of course we produced first draft, second draft, third draft, fourth draft... There were many drafts that were produced and read by critical readers. The evaluation process ended in February around when the final editing had to be done.

**Q To what extent would you agree that the module was intended to serve SAIDE's interest?**

**A** I can't say it served the interest of SAIDE than that of the students. The underlying assumption of your question goes back to designing the module with the B.Ed student in mind. But *we were not designing the module with the B.Ed students in mind*, we were designing the module with the University second year or college student in mind. *I think the B.Ed thing became secondary*. But of course our suspicion is that even in considering those second year students, we were greatly influenced by our experience of teaching B.Eds. So, there is no clear break that now we are serving the B.Ed or college students' interest because the thing is much more complex. In fact, other critical reader argue that some of the issues that we introduced were very complex for the second year students. In fact, it was very clear that it was our B.Ed students.

**Q In your planning, what sort of skills did you want students to achieve at the end of the module?**

**A** Initially, the process was that Mr X was given the task of working out the document - The proposal with all types of things, including the learning outcomes. We all drafted pieces of outcomes and gave them to Mr X to collate. We came up there with +/- 30 learning outcomes. But then we went to SAIDE to present this thing. Some people chopped some of the ideas down. Mr X generated +/- 57 outcomes when we were trying to re-work the task. It was a long list. We decided it was not manageable, and, secondly, this tended to atomize what we were trying to do. Then, ultimately, we went through a process of clarifying in our minds what it is that students need to know and be able to do. Then we came to the idea of 'understanding', 'interpreting' and 'arguing' as the key organising outcomes around which the course would go in. Hence, 'Assessment' (for developing ability to describe) to 'Curriculum' (to develop ability to interpret - to see lexities within curriculum ) and 'Knowledge' (to develop ability to argue). That's why Mr X introduced the idea of logic because it is assumed that people can argue, I think, wrongly. So, it is assumed that people can argue, people have the skill of arguing, it is inborn - that's wrong because *people need to be trained to argue*. So, I think, we said we were going deliberately to develop that skill, but of course, there are other skills which were not sort of put as outcomes, which we had thought out. About



the notion of development of this skill, we don't have the terminal conception of the situation where a learner is totally developing the skill.

**Q OBE suggests that learners should be assessed and credited for the skills they have achieved. To what extent was this principle considered in the planning of this module?**

**A** In my Unit, all assessment involved writing. The medium of writing was used in 'Assessment'. Sometimes they analyse, argue, apply - Various purposes.

**Q How relevant would you say the assessment activities were, towards assessing the intended knowledge and skills ?**

**B** It took a hell of a long time. I set nine activities, without clear assessment criteria. But at the end I said: OK, I have the outcomes, and I have the activities. I asked the question: Do the outcomes and activities match? I found that some of the activities do not match the outcomes, on two levels: On one level, some of the activities were narrow, particularly the initial two activities; they were too much of a descriptive type. Although the point was to ask to describe, they came to 'parrot' like. That's on one level. On another level, the activities were fairly complex, but useful in the sense that they were not in the learning outcomes, but they were very useful activities. Looking at the activities and at the outcomes at the end forced me to be able to say, perhaps we need to adjust the outcomes in order to suit some of the good activities. Sometimes we had to adapt some of the activities in order to suit the outcomes, and also developed the assessment criteria, in view of the outcomes and in view of the activities that we had set. So, that was the process - not a linear process as had been suggested.

**Q About the issue of setting outcomes in this module: What can you say about the OBE idea that every curriculum development should be informed by the expected outcomes?**

**A** To me, outcomes are a guide. They are a guide, they are not crutches and stones. Of course, there are various models of OBE. And some models stick more closely to the model of curriculum development developed by Ralph Tyler in the 1940s. Tyler suggested that you start with objectives, and then the content, and the rest will run from the objectives. One sucrocide (?) there is no feedback - loop into the objectives. But for me, that is a problematic way of looking at the curriculum development. It suggests a linear notion. And it also suggests that you can predict the outcomes of educational processes. What happens at the level of writing because when students interact with it, there are a hell of things which they learn which we had not thought of, which are useful. So, in a sense, if you stick too much on Tyler's notion of the objectives determined curriculum, I don't think you are going to make the process of learning an interesting one.

**Q To what extent did you consider accelerating those learners who master particular knowledge and skills quicker than others, from one Unit to the next, in the module?**

**A** Although I have said earlier that you moved from ‘Assessment’ to ‘Curriculum’ to ‘Argument’, it is not linear. We were not looking at pupils having achieved particular outcomes. But we need to be very careful about this notion of learner, pace, etc. Some of the directory of OBE come from Adult Education where this notion of learner pace works very well for adults who are accumulating some modules here and there in order to put them together into a qualification even if that qualification takes them twenty years. So, learner pace is in that sense. But within the module we will be fooling if we talk about the learner pace issue. There is no such thing because analytical education run in six months. And in six months you must have completed. If you haven’t completed, you must register again.

**Q Comment about the relevancy of the reading articles selected for this module.**

**A** Mine are relevant. They get people to moving in testing. There are many contexts around testing.

**Q Has the module achieved any success?**

**A** I can’t say. What I can say is that, in the unit which I wrote, the tasks, the processes which I intended putting the students through - that process is fairly good. But I can’t be sure of this because I am speaking at the level of intentions, of what I intended. Whether that happened in practise, I can’t say.

**Q Are there any areas of the module which need to be improved?**

**A** Nothing can be restructured. Fundamentally the module will remain the same, with the few changes here and there, particularly the updating of the policies. But generally, no change.

**Q comment about the effectiveness of the tutorial strategy.**

**A** I can’t tell because I was not involved. But I know there were tutorials, help-line, etc. For me, tutorials are the good strategy for implementing. This module is a distance module, but different from that of UNISA because students have to interact with the institution as a whole. Tutors, self- assessment, peer-assessment are the strategies used to ensure that students interact with others - in groups. This operates on three levels, which must be emphasised :

- Personal level
- Peer level
- Tutor-lecturer level

**Q**      **Comment about the need for the training of tutors.**

**A**      People are not born tutors, hence they must be trained particularly *for a common approach* to be applied within the course. But of course I don't say they must do the same thing, but *a general approach* must be the same. With the OBE thing, if tutors were trained and then they got the chance to dialogue among themselves, they could share insights and experiences around the notion of OBE so that when they go and talk to the students, they would have much broader understanding of issues than when they started without.

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION*

## APPENDIX C

### LECTURER 'B' INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

*Interviewee 'B' - Cassette 1*

**Q** About the originality of the module- Was it initiated from inside or outside the department?

**A** It was initiated from outside the department, in the sense that we had been asked by the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) to participate in this material's development programme which they had funding from Kellogg Foundation to produce ten modules within the teacher education, and we were asked to produce one module. And then subsequent to that, the National Ministry approached SAIDE and said couldn't they try and get one of these modules *postract?* So Mr X who was working with SAIDE and was coming from this department suggested that they take the curriculum module (which is the particular module which was originally to made that understanding of the curriculum of the outcomes based). We thought that we had to develop the material for SAIDE for the National Education Ministry but also be able to use them internally. So, in a sense, the development of the materials had that internal and external rational. We felt that when we write these materials, we should be able to use them as well.

One of the tensions in terms of level. We were partly writing the B.Ed level, SAIDE and National Ministry (at college second year level). There was a tension in the terms of the levels which the materials were written for.

We were observant of these tensions in the sense that Lecturer A and I had no experience with the college level of educating. We weren't entirely sure of whom we're writing. We weren't really sure what levels we should mark on, and our experiences had primarily been at B.Ed level... So, for myself, I was trying to make it easier.

**Q** What was the rationale of the development of the module?

**A** As I have said in the beginning that the module was a '*Curriculum module*', then when the Ministry got involved, they were interested in the material to be exemplar of Outcomes Based Education, they didn't say anything about the content, but we thought that perhaps the content should talk about OBE. So, it is not a shifting from this idea of OBE. So, initially the title module was '*Knowledge*' - '*Curriculum*' and '*Assessment*', but later on it became '*Understanding Outcomes Based Education*'. We further shifted to '*Analysing Education*' and the idea was to produce the course which would make students learn skills of

analysing. Hence there were three rationales next to the other. Hence this is another tension with the development of the module.

**Q Comment about the intended analytical skills OBE skills. To what would you say that the module was successful in developing the analytical skills?**

**A** OBE was one of the aims , but in my unit I was trying to work out outcomes and to teach people about OBE, but I am not sure to what extent the module actually succeeded in this. I don't think the module aimed at making people good OBE practitioners. We agreed that we couldn't do that in the module. At most what we wanted people to understand are the basic principles of OBE, and then to show through the material how those kind of things might work. I think we succeeded in the first one, but with the second one, I struggled more because I think that the module was very process-based. The whole idea was to take the students through the process of skills. In that sense, tensions exist between process-based curriculum or process-based pedagogy and outcomes-based education. I'm not sure whether these tensions were resolved in the implementation of the module.

**Q To what extent did you consider to address the principles of differentiation and redress in the development of the module?**

**A** I certainly did think that... I tried this in the definitions, the use of dictionaries, use of contact pages, that is, initiating with text; giving them guide - an attempt to build that redress component.

**Q To what extent would you say that the strategies and methods you used in the development of the module addressed the individual learners' learning needs?**

**A** That to me becomes a kind of tension. That kind of aim (address of individual need) and the massification using materials because you can't or it's difficult to make materials that flexible to address every single person's need in the module, at different levels - the components that are involved: tutorials, lectures, groups, etc., are the attempt to address this issue. So, I'm not sure whether the materials do achieve that but the design of the Analysing Education module as a whole and its component was an attempt to do that.

**Q The relevancy of the materials in meeting the learning needs of the what you did in the module to OBE, to students? (Post-Graduates and Post-Diplomates?).**

**A** The materials do try to target different types of levels: Note the dialogue between teachers at Siyafunda' which makes every teacher, regardless of background, to understand the issues in relation to their own schools - the level where everyone has the common understanding. By merely starting with the issue that was

in tension between teachers in schools: Continuous Assessment, exams, marking, etc. was one way of addressing issues.

We were working in the dark because we did not have the experience basically. My experience particularly was working with Natal College of Education, the external examiner looking at FDE students (fourth year students), who are prepared for coming into the B.Ed degree. I didn't have good experience in terms of their exam scripts and assignment scripts marking in the past. But other than that we were really... the decision to admit these students into B.Ed happened quite late and there was touching going on whether there would be ministerial improvement. And all of a sudden we realised that we had these massive number of students coming in and we needed courses that might provide some sort of a foundation, so then there was a very, very rapid process of writing these materials for this particular course.

In actuality, when Analysing Education was thought out and designed, if you look at the handbook, it wasn't an OBE related course at all, it was *purely* academic skills. And it was really a matter of a number of processes coming together that we decided, "Let's rather use these materials within Analysing Education than writing the complete separate module on Academic skills."

Maybe because I think that from my own experience from the courses like 'Effective Study', where the Department of Educational Psychology offers - which tries to do that sort of academic skills, I found talking to students who have not done that course, I found it hard for those students to think at a metacognitive level about metacognition. The content of the course becomes metacognition and what it is supposed to be teaching is how to think metacognitively, but what a lot of people did with 'learn' is actually 'learn' the metacognitive theory without actually in a right kind of form, so that 'learn' when they learn, they learn techniques like spider-diagram, in terms of being able to repeat those techniques and examples, and be able to demonstrate that on the board but not being able to take a reading in another subject area and use that technique. So, when thinking about Analysing Education, we thought let's not go that way, let's rather take something that is real in terms of teachers' needs, and in terms of interest, and build in these academic skills into the module. We didn't have real time to actually do the study of needs students have. The course is experimental. We learn this from your evaluation and students' evaluation. What we really relied on are our past experiences with the B.Ed students and modules.

I personally was not directly involved in the implementation of the course. But certainly my own experience when I taught at Madadeni in other courses... the idea was to keep the two experiences as similar as possible, so for the reason succession of teaching weekends, first at PMB and second at Madadeni. The experience in both Madadeni and PMB is entirely the same in terms of time contact. So the two situations were considered similar.

**Q To what extent would you say that the principles of ‘portability’ and ‘progression’ were addressed in this module?**

**A** I’m not sure whether it is because I was not really involved in the implementation. My involvement goes up to the material development. And, in terms of the materials, we were somehow... With the idea of how much time spent on one unit to another because of these diversions that students work at their own pace, e.g. 40 minutes against 20 minutes. I think to attend to this, it would need different tutorial groups which address differentiated needs and pace of work, and in terms of support if students are behind. And also there is some important issue that if you have stronger students in the module, they have an important role of contributing into the group as a whole (dimension).

**Q What skills did you want to be developed in the learners when planning and designing this module?**

**A** They are spelt out in the module. The critical things with me were process-related things which are related to developing ability to argue, working with text, and the readings I used were progressively more difficult. At the level of content, I really wanted people to develop understanding of different interpretations of curriculum, and then to particularly explore the interpretation of curriculum that we were making since curriculum has a broad experience of both the teacher and the learner, which incorporates... it’s not only the content thing, but also the process - it includes the environment.

**Q About the assessment activities and their relevancy to assessing those expected outcomes?**

**A** I must say that I really struggled with setting those activities. Some of them along the way definitely by asking people to define, to reflect, to interact, etc. But I’m not sure those are outcomes or criteria. I’m not sure whether the assignments really addressed the assessment of the outcomes. Personally, I don’t think that the module is that outcomes-based. We have different interpretations of outcomes.

In our situation the outcomes were more process related than objective related in the sense that in outcomes you indicate the type of process you want to go through. But I think the way we planned the outcomes to predetermine the process was very strictly outcomes-based approach. The process of getting there is whether you get to the end point. And how you get to the end point is not that essential. If you control it, you get to the end point, then it’s fine. What we are actually saying in the module is that the quest of getting to the end point is half the point, which in a sense is not an outcomes-based education approach. This is something I was not conscious of when I was actually writing, but I’ve just realised how my own understanding -- my own preference to the process-based curriculum influenced the way I interpreted outcomes-based education.

**Q Comment about the strengths and weaknesses of the module in addressing the OBE specification.**

**A** Feedback I got from people outside the B.Ed group found it generally positive in making them understand the OBE. I think that for what it did for better or worse is that it familiarises teachers with OBE and with the concepts, interpretations, the language, etc. So, in the contact level it was quite useful and successful. I have no idea at all in the process-related (applying OBE in their school).

In the materials, I think that a number of things one has to look at, one is the logical thing or order. Some people say Assessment section would be better if it is after the curriculum. I personally never totally saw the integration in terms of what the module as a whole is trying to do in the logic staff, in the third section. That may just be my assumption, just because I'm not a philosopher. But I think in a re-writing, there might be a need of looking at that... is that what it is trying to do is that if the skill that we are teaching in terms of understanding OBE, in terms of content -- the skill have to be integrated into the module as a whole rather than in a separate unit/section. But I don't know how students experienced that section.

**Q Comment about assessment activities.**

**A** I think there were far too many activities. I think the biggest weakness in the area of assessment is activities. This is the kind of thing I personally found difficult generally in the course, designing appropriate assessment activities under 'Assessment'. And, doing it in the kind of module which its content and assessment had to follow OBE. Having not experienced that before, I found it extremely difficult actually. And, I'm sure that area will need quite a lot of improvement. I think that, generally, the storyline idea was very successful, particularly in making the module accessible, which I got from feedback of students outside B.Ed tutorial group. I heard from subject advisers and local inspectors that B.Ed students are playing an important role in their staff for promoting OBE -Teachers are knowledgeable with OBE and skills.

In relation to the intended outcomes, we can't limit what people could do: understanding, critical analysis, etc., are the parts of the intended outcomes.

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION***



## APPENDIX D

### LECTURER 'C' INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

*Interviewee C - Cassette 2*

**Q About the origin of the module. Where and how was the module originated?**

Initially in the department, came out of the Theorising Education course because when we taught Theorising in 1996, Mr X and I realised that the students were struggling with 'Theorising' because they lacked whole lot of basic conceptual thinking skills they needed in order to cope properly with 'Theorising'. So, the origin of the course is way back in the beginning of 1996, and that is why it is called Analysing Education, to match 'Theorising Education'. That was the origin conception of the course.

It should act as the introduction to Outcomes-Based Education. We began to write the module very slowly at that point in time i.e. July - August 1996. Then SAIDE (South African Institute for Distance Education) was given money by Kellogg to develop the whole series of the modules for the pre-service Diploma courses of colleges. That proposal for the diploma funding from Kellogg had been initiated about two years before, but it took about two years before SAIDE said yes and then put the money up. Once SAIDE got the money, both Mr X and I sat down with the Advisory Committee about the project. At the Advisory Committee it was decided to appoint the co-ordinator for the project. He was seconded from the department to SAIDE. He then turned around and said: Look, as you have already started working on 'Analysing Education', it looks like this is the right kind of module in studying education project... which had fifteen modules all together, and this could be one of the modules. So, we thought that this was a good idea and could make sense because we could write for our own students, and for SAIDE, and SAIDE would help us with the costs for writing and producing materials.

So we began. And we conceptualised it. Initially, Mr X and myself, Lecturer B, and Lecturer A got together and said: OK, what kind of a module do we think would make a good foundation course for the Diploma students to teach critical skills and to introduce them to OBE? And that's when we began conceptualising the programme, and at that stage - somewhere at that point in time, the National Ministry of Education, specifically Dr. Andrew Le Roux approached SAIDE and said: Look, I've heard that you've got the team writing this module and the National Ministry desperately needs a module that would introduce teachers to OBE, can't we use this module? So, then SAIDE entered into contract with the National Ministry of Education and the National Ministry introduced the module. And that has caused us a slight problem because now that the module was being both for pre-service college students and in-service teachers and our B.Ed. Suddenly that was the course for our B.Ed, then for pre-service college students, then for National Ministry and service students as well.

**Q About the address of the prospective students' needs: Were the B.Ed students in mind when the course was being developed?**

**A** We wrote the first draft of the module and finished the first draft by January. We then did the second draft quite quickly and the second draft became 'Analysing Education' because at that point that had been printed and made ready for the students. We then had a couple of comments from the second draft from the writers around the country, then we wrote the third draft for SAIDE and the National Ministry. The third draft is that which we had published as 'Understanding Outcomes-Based Education'. And now we have just done the fourth draft.

**Q About the specific skills which you wanted the B.Ed students to develop?**

**A** I should mention that this is the first semester course and it is immediately followed by 'Theorising' and the primary skill of 'Theorising' is 'Analysing' and 'Arguing'. So, in Analysing, we don't have to teach them much about arguing. We are only to introduce them to the processes of arguing. In 'Analysing', we didn't cover enough arguing, but the 'Theorising' people say they will do both theorising and arguing. From Theorising, then Arguing, and I still think that that process is on track. From the students' point of view, by the end of the year, students should be able to argue. And our failure to spend enough time on argument should not affect students because 'Theorising' is meant enough for that.

I think lecturers must make it clearer and more explicit in the beginning of each module - in the materials.

**Q Regarding principles of differentiation, academic background and learner support - To what extent was this addressed in the planning of this module?**

**A** I feel fairly confident. I think we didn't do badly in the first years. The materials were student-centred. Students had inter-personal contact other than tutorials. All teachers enjoyed the course -- Primary and secondary teachers alike -- some could do good and others do bad.

**Q Did you consider training tutors who would teach the module?**

**A** When we originally started designing the module back in June last year, we had the training programme in place. The idea was to advertise to the tutors, and employ them in December and bring them to the University when it opens in the beginning of January and provide them with proper training and materials. But then, the university messed up, the money side of it. We remained with far less money, the only money arrived after four months after the opening of the University. And the tutors ended up being far less trained. But we were fortunate to have the capable tutors.

**Q About the fear that the course might fail to achieve the expected outcomes since tutors were without knowledge and the required skills of the course?**

**A** The other thing that we had forgotten is that we didn't have only the tutorial system in place, we also had the marking system in place, when students had extensively... and we also had help-line. Students had all these to use.

About the different needs? It is not an important issue. I think that the important issue is the students' willingness and commitment to learn to master the course, because they were massive students who used the help-line extensively, who read the comments and feedback from their essays very carefully and as a result, they did fairly well. There were many students who were doing well in the first weekend but didn't put that much effort in the process of learning.

I think the combination of the tutorials, the peer group working, the help-line, the extensive marking and feedback addressed each and every student's learning needs.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**

## APPENDIX E

### TUTOR INTERVIEW

#### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR EVALUATING THE 'ANALYSING EDUCATION' MODULE

1. How was the first encounter with the students in your tutorial group?
2. What strategies did you use to develop confidence and trust between yourself and the students in your tutorial group?
3. How feasible was it for you to attend to the learning problems for each student in your tutorial group?
4. What strategies did you actually use to gain them to participate in the tutorial discussions?
5. About the designed skills which were targeted to be achieved at the end of the course - What skills did you observe to have been achieved?
6. How relevant would you say the content of the learning material was, to addressing the intended knowledge and skills?
  - 6.1 How did you find the content of the first unit, 'Assessment', in terms of accessibility, understandability, and relevancy to what the module intended to teach?
  - 6.2 How accessible, understandable, and relevant was the unit, 'Knowledge', to what the knowledge and skills which the module intended to teach to the learners?
  - 6.3 How accessible, understandable, and relevant was the unit, 'Knowledge', to the knowledge and skills which the module intended to teach to the learners?
7. Comment about the assessment activities - To what extent were they effective in assessing the intended knowledge and skills?
8. To what extent were you successful in implementing this module?

9. To what extent was the critical analysing skill developed to the learners in your tutorial group?
  
10. Comment about the strengths and weaknesses of this module.

APPENDIX F

TUTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

INDICATE IN THE BOX THE ANSWERS THAT REFLECT EITHER YOU PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION OR YOUR EXPERIENCE

1. What is your professional qualification?

2. What is your teaching experience?

2.1 At the school level?

4 year diploma	5 year diploma	B.Ed	M.Ed	Other?
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2.2 At the college level?

? Years
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2.3 At the university level?

? Years
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3. Indicate the levels you had taught or tutored at the college level. If other specify?

1 st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	Other?
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4. Indicate the levels you had tutors at the university level before this Analysing Education module:

St. year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	other?
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5. How much knowledge did you have about the module before tutoring it ?

A lot	Adequate	Very little	None	Other?
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6. Were you confident that you could handle the demands of task of tutoring?

Very much	To some extent	Not really	No	Other?
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**THANK YOU**

## APPENDIX G

### TUTOR 'F' INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

*Interviewee F - Cassette 4*

**Q How was the first encounter with the students?**

**A** First encounter? That's very easy because I was very shocked. My initial experience is that I was going to be tutoring Post Graduate students, obviously senior schools teachers. I really felt that they would understand different themes and concepts of different approaches to education. So I was very shocked when I came to realise that seventeen of the twenty-five were primary school teachers. All of a sudden I realised that there was a racial tension and gender tension i.e. most of the black men would never relate to me at all. Some tried to check me up. Others I would realise that there was a definite sense that they keep a distance. Women were a lot more neutral, but I really had to work very hard at gaining their confidence. So, it was quite a battle at the beginning. It really took one and a half weeks to gain their confidence.

But students themselves: It was the first time I've taught black people. It was really interesting otherwise I had black teachers in the past but I was doing matric-type system. So, when I came I had to reset my assumptions about things. So, when I went home on the first day, I can't believe what I got myself into. I really thought it would be much more academic and philosophical, but all of a sudden I discovered that they were actually relating against philosophy. They wanted practical issues. I had to set in that I had never taught junior school. So we had to form an interactive basis. At that time, it was a crisis for me, particularly on the OBE point of view, I said, I know OBE yet I didn't at all. It was because it is interactive method, a learning process for me as well. I knew I wasn't going to be the person who knew everything.

**Q A follow up from the response: How did you actually gain their confidence?**

**A** Firstly, I actually ensured or told them that I knew what I was talking about - "knowledge" - to let them 'know' because that is what they were anxious about getting some staff.

Secondly, they should actually see that I actually cared. That was very important. We thought of tea - I brought them my kettle, my tea and coffee. I also gave them my telephone number. I knew that there was help-line but I told them that if they see a need a phoning me, they had to, to break the barriers. The next battle came later as the course progressed. They wanted me to give them everything but I told them that that was the thing I actually was not prepared to do. There was another battle later which I will come up in the next question.



**Q In the situation where they could ask you questions for which you had no answers, what did you do?**

**A** At first I was very anxious because of the gender thing. I was very conscious, so I really had to teach almost as I teach in my normal classroom. As soon as I saw that they were all black and that the majority were primary school teachers, I thought I had to teach them. As soon as I realised that you've got to be what you are in your real normal and classroom situation (facilitating), it was easier. The first anxiety is that they tried to throw all the questions at me, and I attempted to answer them all, but in the process I realised the best way I actually had to face them to realise that they had answers in themselves (my second battle).

**Q What strategies did you actually use to gain them to participate?**

**A** The main that I thought we should have started the course with was to show them that they had knowledge in them. Instead of throwing philosophy and new jargon and new terminology, we should have started by realising their values and knowledge e.g. those novelty things like: Is Johannesburg a city? etc. You know, to make them comfortable and then throwing philosophy and jargon. In fact, they were threatened because we simply threw this philosophy and that. We told them that everything that they did was bad, previously, and that everything we were going to give them in OBE was good. But what did we give? We didn't give them practically anything to hold on to, we only gave them philosophy. So, the skills that they needed were small group work, but then the content had to come from them. They had to be geared to the fact that they didn't have to do reading to get new jargon, to regurgitate to the tutor. They must start from where they are comfortable, you know, the issues : discipline in the classroom, and values and contested knowledge. That's where they must start.

The critical issues for the teacher in the classroom is where they must start. And what is major critical issue of the Black teacher in the classroom? Discipline. We should have taught them practical skills in the tutorials, then the philosophy. Actually the course is characterised much by the philosophy than practice.

**Q Although the course was philosophy there are skills designed by the planners to be achieved. About the designed skills which were targeted to be achieved at the end of the course, which ones did you observe to have been achieved?**

**A** I think the first skill was small group work which they had started developing. They started realising -primary teachers- that there are different ways to use small group work. I think what really was good was the 'Assessment' thing because, I think, starting the course with 'Assessment' was very, very good.

The other thing was the 'contested knowledge', was a very important thing. You don't know whether the skill was really enough for them to actually utilise it practically because this 'contested knowledge' was really an eye-opener for them and the 'discipline' thing was not handled well enough for them because all of them had thrown

it up because they really said you don't give us other ways which we can use alternatively to the discipline we had been using.

So, another skill that came up, that they realised quite strongly was that mole learning was not a value. So, there is a definite notion of 'group work', 'assessment' and the idea of 'contested knowledge' which mole learning does not test, and different people's opinion. I think those skills were touched down quite well. The skill of understanding was really achieved.

**Q Comment about the critical analysing skills? Were they developed in the learners?**

**A** That was cut short. The course really emphasised learning a jargon, the philosophical foundation, that was informing. The course can not change the mind-set of teachers (which must be changed first because teachers were taught in CNE) before being able to attend to the actual OBE skills.

**Q About skill of interpreting the knowledge. Did they....?**

**A** ...What they really struggled with was that the next level, they found that the whole notion of 'assumptions' was really difficult for them i.e. this is what is assumed by that you had to keep on coming back to that. I think the issue is the language problem because in Zulu, they can tell you it's the word assumption because those are words that are philosophy based. They are not articulate in everyday language. I think that's the problem.

**Q About the skill of arguing? Was that achieved?**

**A** That's what really worries me because arguments don't give reasons. They don't substantiate. They rarely say that's what I think or feel. They really did not substantiate.

**Q About the relevancy of material?**

**A** 'Assessment'? I found that really relevant, super. The 'Curriculum'? I felt was a strange... 'Curriculum' is more broad concept; by the time you get to 'Knowledge', there is that repetition and you can't compartmentalise 'Assessment', 'Curriculum' and 'Knowledge' because 'Curriculum' is not something that can be compartmentalised. But I feel starting with 'Assessment' was good- It is a process. But 'Curriculum' to be compartmentalised was quite a problem. But 'Assessment' within OBE was understood. 'Curriculum' encompasses 'Assessment' and 'Knowledge'. I think it confused most of the people. They went to the extent of asking what curriculum is. The issues in the materials were not easy, but the language was easy.

**Q Comment about the relevancy of the assessment activities towards assessing the intended knowledge and skills.**

**A** Activities in ‘Curriculum’ and ‘Knowledge’ could have been utilised earlier because they were far more accessible to the students i.e. the students were very comfortable with them, especially knowledge and values. I found them really good. The terrible thing is that from the philosophical content the activities were so practical. One thing is that we did not have enough time to do them properly (time factor).

**Q About the success in implementing the module?**

**A** On one point I was feeling very nervous because I felt I understood it but I didn’t see that my understanding was their understanding. And so, I thought there was a gap between my understanding and their understanding. And because of the fact that I should have spoken a little bit more but I was so conscious that I should let them discover for themselves that I thought weren’t quite secure. But at the end of the course it was wonderful. I thought they were getting there.

**Q About other weaknesses and strengths?**

**A** *The strength* is that it is vital, as something happens at the universal level because it’s a whole new concept that is coming into South Africa but the major thing is that what... when I started reading about it, I was very excited but as I went on, I discovered it was becoming politicised, possibly a little bit by Lecturer C, because may be it’s because he knows where it started, politically. But definitely, a lot of the IFP supporters were threatened by it, and definitely it was a political issue. I felt that that was coming through, that a lot of resistance was political. And it needs to be done at the University level because, to introduce it, that’s the strength of the module that it started at this level...It must remain philosophy not practical because that was a tension that teachers expected practical thing (implementation).

Another strength is the people who implemented it; Lecturer A, Lecturer B and Lecturer C are phenomenal for producing this thing that is useful for our country.

But what I perceived as weakness of this module is that it was naively introduced. The simplicity belief that all teachers who had been in the struggle would believe that CNE (Christian National Education) was all bad. If somebody tells you that what you have been doing to your job is all bad... is actually personally related, a personal thing. Naiveté in the sense that assumed that people would just accept OBE and that everybody would just say :‘thank you’. Other issues might have come up, that is ‘resistance’ and ‘tension’ to change.

Most students argue that they have not been given a chance of critiquing the course.

## APPENDIX H

### Students' Open-ended Questionnaire

#### B.ED ANALYSING EDUCATION, 1997

#### COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to collect information about the activities you performed, you experiences, the characteristics and outcomes of the 'Analysing Education' module.

It is a formative evaluation questionnaire: It intends to collecting information from you in order to improve the module for next year. And, since you are the person who has this information, a kind request is made that you reflect on your experiences and share you perceptive on 'Analysing Education' module by answering this questionnaire. Sincerity and truth about your experiences and knowledge is what is essential. There are neither wrong nor correct answers.

#### WHAT ARE YOU EXPECTED TO DO?

1. Use the computer sheet provided for your responses.
2. Do not complete the sections on the answer sheets on the answer sheet concerning student number, name, sex, grade, date or special code.
3. In the block marked 'Additional Data', write 'Analysing Education', under 'Course'.
4. Shade clearly the item which to you is correct and relevant for the information required.
5. Use an HB pencil only when shading you responses.

(i) SHADE CLEARLY IN THE RELEVANT BOX THE LETTER THAT REPRESENTS YOUR ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is your professional qualification?

A	4 year diploma
B	5 Year diploma
C	4 year degree
D	HDE/UED
E	Other?

2. In which of the following levels of education are you experienced?

A	Grade 0 to 4
B	Grade 5 to 7
C	Grade 8 to 9
D	Grade 10 to 12
E	Other?

3. What level of education are you presently teaching?

A	Grade 0 to 4
B	Grade 5 to 7
C	Grade 8 to 9
D	Grade 10 to 12
E	Other?

**(ii). YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE MODULE**

4. How many were you in your tutorial group?

A	Less than 10
B	10 to 15
C	16 to 20
D	21 to 25
E	26 and above

5. In your tutorial group, you tutor gave you attention to you as individuals or as smaller groups of :

A	3 to 7
B	8 to 10
C	11 to 15
D	16 to 20
E	other?

- (iii) **SHADE CLEARLY THE LETTER THAT REPRESENTS YOUR ANSWER TO THE QUESTION ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SPECIFIC OUTCOMES IN THE MODULE, 'ANALYSING EDUCATION'**

<b>A=YES</b>	<b>B=TO SOME EXTENT</b>	<b>C=NOT REALLY</b>	<b>D= NO</b>	<b>E = OTHER</b>
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6. The purpose of the module was to teach me about the new OBE paradigm to be practised in SA	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
7. The purpose of the study to teach and develop in me the skills of analysing critically, the Outcomes-Based education.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
8. The purpose of the module was to, develop in me a positive attitude to current changes in the SA education.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
9. The module was successful in developing in me the skills of understanding OBE.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
10. The module was successful in developing in me the skills of critically analysing OBE	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
11. With the skills I acquired from OBE I can analyse critically, any other material.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
'OTHER' COMMENTS?					

- (iv) **SHADE CLEARLY THE LETTER REPRESENTS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE MODULE:**

(a)

12. In the group, I was actively involved in the discussions and debates that took place	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
13. The tutor tried her/his best to 'pull' me the discussions the discussions that took place .	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
14. The tutor was able to identify my difficulties with the module.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
15. The tutor was able to address my problems which s/he had identified, or which I had told her/him about the module.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
16. It was easy to present my difficulties with the module to the tutor.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
17. I never feared contributing ideas in the tutorials.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
'OTHER' COMMENTS?					

(b)

18. Reading Articles in Unit 1 (Madaus, Ebel, Sweezey, etc) link well to the theme 'Assessment'.	A	B	C	D	E
19. Reading Articles in Unit 2 (Harley, Orstein, Fuller, and Feinberg and Saltis) were accessible and relevant to the theme, 'Curriculum' of this module.	A	B	C	D	E
20. Reading Articles in Unit 3 (Mouton, Ryle, Dewey, and Biko), link well to the theme 'Knowledge' of this module.	A	B	C	D	E
21. The 3 Units: Assessment, Curriculum and Knowledge enabled me to understand clearly the Outcomes Based Education paradigm.	A	B	C	D	E
22. Assessment activities in these Units were formative i.e. their purpose was to develop in me the ability to analyse critically through writing.	A	B	C	D	E
23. Assessment activities were directed towards assessing the critical analysing skills in the module.	A	B	C	D	E
24. The materials designed for this module guided my learning and assessment activities such that I was able to work on my own,	A	B	C	D	E
25 Assessment activities in the learning materials were useful for my own assessment.	A	B	C	D	E
26. Assessment activities were easy to understand and to do.	A	B	C	D	E
27. I did all the activities I was expected to do.	A	B	C	D	E
'OTHER' COMMENTS ?					

(d)

28. The tutor gave us clear feedback on the skills we ha achieved in the activities we were expected to do in the module.	A	B	C	D	E
29. Learners who had achieved some skills in the activities done in the module were officially given a chance of proceeding to, the next unit in the module.	A	B	C	D	E
30. The assessment activities used in the module were really informed by OBE paradigm.	A	B	C	D	E
'OTHER' COMMENTS					

31. The teaching strategies used in the in this module addressed my learning needs and difficulties .	A	B	C	D	E
32. The help line contributed to my success in this module.	A	B	C	D	E
33. I had no problem with the meeting sessions' time table.	A	B	C	D	E
34. This was really an informative valuable module.	A	B	C	D	E

**(e) WHAT ARE YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF THIS 'ANALYSING EDUCATION' MODULE? (If the space provided is too small for your response(s), turn the page over, and use that space)**

35. What did you find to be the purpose of the module?	
36. Do you think the module achieved its purpose(s)?	
37. What did you find to be the strength(s) in or of this module?	
38. Any weaknesses?	
39. Any suggestions for improvement?	